

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 48  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Ross)

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**Election Judges Training Pilot Program**

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This bill creates an Election Judges Training Pilot Program to train and employ University of Maryland, College Park and St. Mary's College of Maryland students to work as election judges in the State for the 2010 primary and general elections. The Governor must include \$100,000 in either the fiscal 2010 or 2011 budget for the State Board of Elections to be disbursed for the pilot program. The pilot will be administered by the Center for American Politics and Citizenship (CAPC) at UMCP and the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) at St. Mary's College in conjunction with SBE. CAPC and CSD have to issue a report on the pilot program to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2010.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2008 and terminates June 30, 2011.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures would increase by at least \$100,000 in FY 2010 to provide election judge training for the 2010 primary and general elections. Alternatively, general fund expenditures could increase by at least \$100,000 in FY 2011 as allowed under the bill. To the extent the \$100,000 appropriation does not cover the costs of the program, additional general/higher education funding may be required. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation in either FY 2010 or 2011.**

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** A similar pilot program does not exist under current law.

Each local board must provide at least four election judges to staff each polling place, though in a precinct with fewer than 200 registered voters the local board only has to provide two election judges. An election judge generally must be a registered voter who resides in the county where appointed, though if a qualified individual residing in the county cannot be found with reasonable effort, a local board may appoint a registered voter residing in any part of the State. A minor who is at least age 17 but too young to be a registered voter may be an election judge if the minor meets all other qualifications for voter registration in the county.

SBE is responsible for developing a training program for election judges, upon which the local boards base the training they conduct for their judges. Each election judge has to participate in the training program unless appointed under emergency circumstances.

**Background:** SBE and local election boards have worked with local universities on election-related matters in a few different cases in recent years. SBE commissioned the University of Maryland Baltimore County and UMCP in 2005 to conduct studies of voter-verification technology, and SBE has partnered with UMBC in establishing the National Center for the Study of Elections which provides technical assistance and research support for SBE.

The Baltimore County and Baltimore City Board of Elections have also utilized the University of Baltimore's Schaefer Center for Public Policy to train election judges.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** HB 542 of 2007, a similar bill, was passed by the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee where no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** University of Maryland, College Park; St. Mary's College of Maryland; University of Maryland Baltimore County, National Center for the Study of Elections; University of Baltimore, Schaefer Center for Public Policy; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510