

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 499 (Senator Muse, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Election Law - Statewide Voter Registration List - Removal of Inactive Voters

This bill repeals provisions of State law that (1) require that a voter who has been placed into inactive status on the statewide voter registration list be removed from the list after failing to vote in an election in a period ending with the second general election and (2) allow a voter to be removed from the statewide voter registration list if the voter has failed to respond to a specified confirmation notice and has not voted or appeared to vote (and, if necessary, corrected the record of the voter's address) in an election during the period beginning with the date of the notice through the next two general elections.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to significantly impact State finances; however, to the extent the bill reduces the number of inactive voters removed from the statewide voter registration list, costs associated with increasing the capacity of the statewide voter registration database may be incurred in future years.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to significantly impact local government finances; however, to the extent the bill reduces the number of inactive voters removed from the statewide voter registration list, local boards may incur additional mailing or other costs associated with inactive voters in future years.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: If it appears, from information provided by the postal service or an agency with which a local board has made arrangements to receive change of address

information, that a voter has moved to a different address outside the State, a confirmation notice informing the voter that he or she may be placed into inactive status on the statewide voter registration list must be sent by the election official in the county of the voter's most recent residence.

If the voter fails to respond, the voter's name is placed into inactive status and an inactive voter who fails to vote in an election in the period ending with the second general election is removed from the statewide voter registration list.

An election director may not remove a voter from the statewide voter registration list on the grounds of a change of address unless (1) the voter confirms in writing that he or she has changed residence to a location outside the State or (2) the voter has failed to respond to a confirmation notice and has not voted or appeared to vote (and, if necessary, corrected the record of the voter's address) in an election during the period beginning with the date of the notice through the next two general elections.

Registrants placed into inactive status may not be counted for official administrative purposes including establishing precincts and reporting official statistics.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1286 (Delegate Valderrama) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City, Charles County, Frederick County, State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 1, 2009
ncs/hlb

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

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