

Department of Legislative Services
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Revised

Senate Bill 225

(Senators Dyson and Middleton)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Election Law - Access to Voting Room and Voting Booth by Minors Not Eligible to Vote

This bill allows an individual younger than age 18 who accompanies a voter to have access to the voting room at a polling place, subject to specified requirements, including that the individual is not eligible to vote in that election. The bill also specifies that an individual older than age 17 may not accompany a voter into a voting booth unless the individual is providing specified assistance to a voter.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill's changes are not expected to materially affect local government finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: An individual younger than age 13 may accompany a voter into the voting room at a polling place provided the individual is in the care of the voter and does not disrupt or interfere with normal voting procedures. Not more than two individuals younger than age 13 may accompany a voter.

An individual who is 13 or older may not accompany a voter into a voting booth except under specified circumstances in which a voter requires assistance in marking or

preparing a ballot because of a physical disability or inability to read the English language and the voter chooses the individual for assistance.

Chapter 317 of 2004 increased the age limit for a minor individual that may accompany a voter into a voting booth other than for assistance from 10 to 12.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 121 of 2010 received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 240 of 2010 received a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 3 of 2009 passed in the House, but received no further action from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Cross File: HB 257 (Delegate Murphy, *et al.*) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections; Baltimore City; Allegany, Anne Arundel, Harford, and Wicomico counties; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 4, 2011
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