

Department of Planning and Budget 2002 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number** HB1222

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. **Patron** Darner

3. **Committee** Privileges and Elections

4. **Title** Information on certain statewide referenda and bond proposals.

5. **Summary/Purpose:**

Sets out a requirement to prepare and publish a special explanation of any bond proposal being submitted to the voters for approval in a statewide referendum. The bill calls for a neutral explanation of the bond proposal including information on the projects being financed, the costs of the bonds, and the costs of funding the projects through current revenues.

6. **Fiscal Impact Estimates are:** Conditional

7. **Budget amendment necessary:** No

8. **Fiscal implications:** The State Board of Elections indicates that the bill as introduced (without a word count limit), could dramatically increase costs of publishing explanations of statewide ballot issues, now estimated at \$200,000 for the first issue on a November ballot, and an additional \$20,000 for each extra issue. The SBE indicated that there would be no additional fiscal impact if the current 500-word limit was maintained.

Explanation of costs: Whenever questions are to be submitted to voters in a statewide referendum, sections 30-19.9 and 30-19.10 of the Code require that the State Board of Elections (1) publish prior to the referendum a paid notice of explanation in a major daily newspaper across the state, (2) publish a brochure or booklet explaining the referendum in sufficient number to provide a copy to any interested person, and (3) post an explanation at each polling place on the day of the election.

Based on the experience of constitutional amendments on the ballot two years ago, the paid newspaper advertising would cost about \$100,000. Cost to publish the required brochures and posters is estimated at \$100,000.

The publication estimate assumes printing 400,000 brochures, enough for the 134 registration offices in the state to distribute to 10 percent of the approximately 4.0 million registered voters in Virginia. Brochures are assumed to be printed two sides on 8 1/2 by 11 paper. Printing costs for the poster assume publication of 2,270 copies of a poster sized 11 by 17 inches, enough for each of the 2,264 polling places in the state (e.)

Not that, should there be additional questions or proposed Constitutional amendments on the ballot, costs would be higher. For each additional ballot question, newspaper advertising costs would increase by 20 percent. Printing costs would increase if the additional questions necessitated larger paper stock..

9. Specific agency or political subdivisions affected: State Board of Elections, local electoral boards and general registrars.

10. Technical amendment necessary: No

11. Other comments: None

Date: 2/1/02mtb

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cc: Secretary of Administration