

## Department of Planning and Budget 2012 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB786

**House of Origin**    ☒ Introduced    ☐ Substitute    ☐ Engrossed  
**Second House**    ☐ In Committee    ☐ Substitute    ☐ Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Lopez

**3. Committee:** Privileges and Elections

**4. Title:** Elections; absentee voting

**5. Summary:** Provides that qualified voters may vote absentee in person without providing an excuse or reason for not being able to vote in person on Election Day. The bill retains the present statutory list of specific reasons entitling a voter to cast an absentee ballot for those persons who vote absentee by mail.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 87, HB30

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary

**7a. Expenditure Impact:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2012	0	0	
2013	\$90,000	0	General

**8. Fiscal Implications:** State Board of Elections (SBE) states that implementing this bill will require the agency to: (1) revise the Virginia state absentee ballot application form, instructions, voter education and guidance documents, and (2) modify the statewide election management system (VERIS). SBE indicates that localities will incur additional costs to staff general registrar offices and satellite location for increased in person absentee voting in the 45 days before elections.

SBE estimates the current first year cost of implementing this legislation at \$90,000, consisting of \$80,000 for a major VERIS change and \$10,000 to revise, translate and replace the absentee application form and update voter education and guidance documents. In 2011, the actual fiscal impact of implementation costs to SBE for similar legislation was \$45,000. SBE estimates that the current cost will be higher because these kinds of changes affecting VERIS absentee functions must be classified as major changes which cost \$80,000. These costs reflect the increased complexity of federal and state laws surrounding absentee voting. SBE states that this legislation could have a significant fiscal impact on localities by requiring extra staff for increased in person absentee voting.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** SBE and localities.

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

**11. Other Comments:** N/A

**Date:** 1/27/2012