

Department of Planning and Budget 2015 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB691-S1

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

2. Patron: Deeds

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Vote centers; pilot program.

5. Summary: Authorizes the State Board of Elections to conduct a pilot program under which one or more localities unanimously approved by the State Board would establish vote centers for use in primary elections instead of operating a polling place for every precinct in the locality. The bill defines "vote center" as a location established by local ordinance where qualified voters from two or more designated precincts are directed to vote. The bill requires the governing body of a locality applying to participate in the pilot program to have the unanimous consent of its local electoral board. The bill also requires the State Board to publish a report on the program by August 15 of any year in which a vote center is used. The provisions of the bill would expire on December 31, 2019.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes – Item 83.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary – see Item 8.

Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2015	\$0	0.00	-
2016	\$25,000	0.00	GF
2017	\$0	0.00	-
2018	\$0	0.00	-
2019	\$0	0.00	-
2020	\$0	0.00	-
2021	\$0	0.00	-

8. Fiscal Implications: Senate Bill 691 would result in a change to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) so the different polling locations can be documented and produced upon inquiry. The change to VERIS includes the vendor building out an entire module to support the tracking of vote centers and voter assignments to the vote centers. The Department of Elections would need to modify reports within VERIS to account for the vote center locations and modify the Online Voter Registration system to include vote center information. Finally, the Department would have to modify data extracts of poll locations to account for the vote centers. According to the Department, this change would cost the agency approximately \$25,000.

The proposed legislation may create the need for additional State Board meetings beyond the budgeted amount in order to promulgate guidelines and approved submitted locality plans. In addition, the legislation creates an additional reporting requirement by requiring the State Board to publish a report on the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot program by August 15 of any year in which one or more localities participate in the pilot program. Any administrative costs related this legislation is expected to be absorbed by the agency.

There are other costs associated with implementing this legislation, including printing and mailing of the voter registration card, giving general notice to affected voters, and fully training election officials. The Department indicates that all of these costs would be absorbed by the localities participating in the pilot program.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Elections; electoral boards; and localities.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: The substitute for Senate Bill 691 incorporates Senate Bill 1077 (Vogel). This legislation is also identical to House Bill 1312 (Anderson).

c: Secretary of Administration