

Department of Planning and Budget 2015 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB708

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

2. Patron: Edwards

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Elections; absentee voting by persons age 65 or older.

5. Summary: Entitles persons age 65 or older on the day of an election for which an absentee ballot is requested to vote absentee.

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	\$8,814	0.00	GF
2017	\$0	0.00	-
2018	\$0	0.00	-
2018	\$0	0.00	-
2020	\$0	0.00	-
2021	\$0	0.00	-

8. Fiscal Implications: According to the Department of Elections, this bill would require an update to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) to establish a new reason code (category) to identify voters 65 years or older to vote absentee, updates to absentee forms, reports, and other VERIS functionality to accommodate the new reason code (category). The Department estimates the cost to be \$2,500 for changes to VERIS; \$2,200 for changes to forms, web materials, and guidance documents; and \$4,114 to print and distribute new forms. Funding for these changes are not currently built into the Department's approved contracts and projects; therefore, this legislation would require a budget amendment in the amount of \$8,814 in fiscal year 2016 only.

Localities may also experience an increase in the total cost of processing the absentee ballots at the local registrar's office. Mailing an absentee ballot costs at least \$1.75 with postage plus the staff time needed to review ballot requests. In addition, staff time would increase for processing in-person absentee voting.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Elections; general registrars; and localities.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This legislation is identical to House Bill 2252 (Preston), House Bill 1922 (Murphy), Senate Bill 719 (McWaters), Senate Bill 758 (Barker), Senate Bill 822 (Miller), and Senate Bill 910 (Wexton).