

Department of Planning and Budget 2015 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB747-E

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

2. Patron: Watkins

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Absentee voting; application for ballot.

5. Summary: Requires that an absentee ballot application made by mail, electronic or telephonic transmission to a facsimile device, or other means be made no later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day prior to the election in which the applicant is applying to vote absentee. Current law requires the application be made no later than the seventh day prior to the election.

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	-
2019	\$0	0.00	-
2020	\$0	0.00	-
2021	\$0	0.00	-

8. Fiscal Implications: According to the Department of Elections, this legislation is expected to require changes to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) to modify code within VERIS to allow voters to submit an absentee ballot application on the eleventh day, rather than seventh day, before an election. There will also have to be updates to absentee forms, reports, and other VERIS functionality to accommodate the new requirement. 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 experience some savings due to an increase of in-person absentee voting, which would reduce the number of mailed ballots with a postage cost of at least \$1.75 each plus the staff time needed to review ballot requests.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: The introduced version of Senate Bill 747 required that an absentee ballot application made by mail, electronic or telephonic transmission to a facsimile device, or other means be made no later than 5:00 p.m. on the fourteenth day, rather than the seventh day. The Senate amendment requires that an absentee ballot application made by mail, electronic or telephonic transmission to a facsimile device, or other means be made no later than 5:00 p.m. on the eleventh day. The Senate amendment did not change the fiscal impact for implementing the provisions of Senate Bill 747.

c: Secretary of Administration