

## Department of Planning and Budget 2017 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** SB1131

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/>	In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Mason

**3. Committee:** Privileges and Elections

**4. Title:** Absentee voting; eligibility of certain persons.

**5. Summary:** Entitles a person to vote absentee if he is unable to go in person to the polls on the day of the election because he is primarily and personally responsible for a child or for an ill or disabled individual who is confined at home. The bill also entitles a person to vote absentee if he lacks access to reliable personal transportation.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** No.

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

**8. Fiscal Implications:** According to the Department of Elections (ELECT), 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 who are primarily and personally responsible for the care of a child 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. The fiscal impact is expected to be minimal and can be absorbed within the agency's existing resources.

As stand-alone legislation, ELECT considers implementation of this bill as "routine," and does not require additional funding. The agency will review all electoral legislation likely to be enacted prior to the passage by each house. If the aggregate number of "routine" bills likely to pass either house is unusually large, it is possible the agency will require additional resources. If so, ELECT will identify the costs at that time.

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 and 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:** Virginia Department of Elections, State Board of Elections, local electoral boards, and general registrars

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No.

**11. Other Comments:** This bill is a companion to House Bill 2180 (Sickles).