

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2018 General Assembly Session

Bill:SB254

Patron: Dance

Date: 1/29/2018

In accordance with the provisions of §30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced legislation:

Bill Summary:

Provides that any registered voter may vote by absentee ballot in person in any election in which he is qualified to vote without providing a reason for being unable to vote in person on election day. The bill retains the statutory list of reasons allowing a voter to cast an absentee ballot by mail.

*** Please note this bill is identical to HB835 (Bagby).

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**Executive Summary:**

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.00 - \$274,000.00. A majority of localities noted that the bill would require additional staff, and equipment costs to accommodate additional voters to onsite, and offsite locations.

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**Local Analysis:**

**Locality:** City of Danville

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$7,000.00

This estimate is based on the additional staffing costs to handle demand, which is estimated at \$7,000. This would just be maintaining current office with no additional locations for voting.

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Locality: City of Harrisonburg

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$5,000.00

Fiscal impact is per election. This would require full staffing for 45 days prior to an election with a large enough room to handle voters. It would also require additional staff in the office.

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**Locality:** City of Winchester

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$15,000.00

HBs 57, 74, 733, and 835 all provide for some loosening on the limits (“no excuse”) of absentee voting – or the creation of “Early Voting” -- Some would require hours on Saturdays (beyond the 2 Saturdays prior to E-Day that we already work) and at least one of these bills allow for voting hours on some Sundays. All would require an increase in staff and staff hours, and office space. We would be looking at maybe at 2 more seasonal hourly assistant registrars – working about 4 or 5 pay periods prior to Election Day. This would be due to our having to “be open for business” for an increase in in-person voting, while at the same time juggling the normal “close of books” prior to E-Day and the extremely busy time of election prep.

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Locality: County of Henrico

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$274,000.00

Considering current voting trends, Henrico would need satellite voting locations at recreation centers and libraries for approximately 30 days out of the current 45 day absentee voting period, to accommodate the significantly increased foot traffic. One off-site location would cost- \$8,000 for a voting machine, \$4,000 for network line, computers, and printers, \$1000 for ballot storage and \$10/hr for 6 poll workers running about 8 hours a day for 30 days (\$14,400). Henrico would need to add at least two sites in each of the 5 districts. 10 sites at \$27,400 each totals to \$274,000.

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**Locality:** Fairfax County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

No fiscal impact.

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