

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2019 General Assembly Session

Bill: SB1035

Patron: Locke

Date: 1/18/2019

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:

Absentee voting; no-excuse absentee. Permits any registered voter to vote by absentee ballot in any election in which he is qualified to vote. The bill removes the current list of statutory reasons under which a person may be entitled to vote by absentee ballot and removes references to those reasons from other sections of the Code.

Please note that HB1641, SB1026 and SB1672 are companions of the bill.

Executive Summary:

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.00 - \$80,096.00. Localities indicated that the bill would require additional staff, and additional costs related to postage, supplies, advertising, and telecom charges. Localities also indicated that the estimated costs would be higher for non-Presidential elections, and the estimate does not include the cost for Primary Elections. One locality indicated that there would be costs but did not provide any estimate. Another locality indicated that the bill would not have any fiscal impact as they are not responsible for voting.

Local Analysis:

Locality: City of Danville

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$29,000.00

This bill appears to include both in-person and absentee by mail. We always consider impact based on highest turnout presidential election. Additional postage, envelopes and printing would add up to \$20,000 for one election with additional staffing to handle volume \$9,000 for one election. Local and primary elections would be a little less.

Locality: City of Harrisonburg

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$25,000.00

This is an average estimate. The costs could be lower for a primary but could exceed this in a Presidential election year. In addition, a larger facility would need to be found from what we are currently using. We would highly encourage the state to provide the additional funding if approved.

Locality: City of Norfolk

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

Additional time from employees may be needed if an increase in absentee voting occurs.

Locality: City of Virginia Beach

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$80,096.00

The cost cited above is the estimated total cost for the 2019 general election should this law pass.

This estimate includes the following costs: An additional Full-time staff member (\$52,089); Additional contracted manpower (\$22,266); supplies, advertising, and telecom charges (\$5,741).

In an non-Presidential even years, such as the recently concluded 2018 election, the cost estimated by Virginia Beach would be \$91,628. This is because added contracted manpower position would be needed to check absentee ballots.

Please note this costs are only for the General Election because primaries are not mandatory in the Commonwealth of Virginia. However, as we anticipate that both major political parties would select the option of a primary rather than a convention, the estimated yearly fiscal impact would likely be double the costs provided throughout this section.

Locality: Town of Blacksburg

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

The Town does not have responsibility for voting. It is done by the County.

Locality: Town of Luray

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

No fiscal impact on the Town, as elections are managed by Page County.