

Department of Planning and Budget

2014 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB55

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: Cole, M.

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Voter registration; adds political party affiliation to information an applicant must provide.

5. Summary: Elections; voter registration; political party affiliation. Adds party affiliation to the information that an applicant is asked to provide when registering to vote. The applicant may indicate that he is an independent. Voters registered prior to January 1, 2015, will be designated as independent unless they provide a political party designation in writing or electronically to the general registrar. Voters may change their party affiliation or independent status at any time before an election until the registration records are closed. The bill does not change Virginia's present primary laws, and all registered voters remain eligible to participate in the primary of a political party that chooses to nominate by primary.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes, Item 83, HB 30

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary, See Item 8

7a. Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2015	\$133,200	0	General Fund
2016	\$20,000	0	General Fund
2017	\$20,000	0	General Fund
2018	\$20,000	0	General Fund
2019	\$20,000	0	General Fund
2020	\$20,000	0	General Fund

8. Fiscal Implications:

The State Board of Elections (SBE) indicates that the implementation and ongoing expenses of a party affiliation option for voter registration will be costly. First, significant modifications to Virginia's statewide voter registration system (VERIS) will need to be made, amounting to approximately \$80,000 for FY 2015. SBE estimates that approximately \$25,000 will be needed to develop pollbook production processes that will account for party registration as well as modifying existing forms, guidance documents and voter education (\$2,200), printing and distribution of forms (\$6,000), and purchasing and mailing localities paper stock on which to print voter registration cards (\$20,000 annually). Additional expenses will be incurred in later

fiscal years but the bulk of the changes are expected in the first two years of implementation. Localities will also have a recurring cost for mailing new voter cards to voters who change the party affiliation in their voter record. Estimates for the costs of printing and mailing are approximately \$600,000 in FY 2015 and FY 2016.

Cost savings may be possible using SBE's new online voter registration portal to allow voters to communicate changes and opt out of receiving a new voter card by mail. One foreseeable cost savings is that the remaining use of paper pollbooks for more restrictive primaries will have fewer pages. Also, party registration could result in parties not opting for pledge requirements permitted for presidential primaries under § 24.2-545, a separate cost. The volume of applications printed, distributed and received by SBE and the registrars, is expected to be much greater in the first years of implementation.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Elections, local governments

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: None.

11. Other Comments: This bill is similar to HB31.

Date: January 17, 2014

File: H:\General Government\GENERAL ASSEMBLY\2014 Session\SBE\Introduced\HB55\HB55.doc