

Department of Planning and Budget

2015 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB2397

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: Taylor

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act; efficiencies reforms.

5. Summary: Makes several changes to the Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act (UMOVA) and other Code sections relating to absentee voting by those voters covered under UMOVA. The bill requires the Department of Elections to make available at least 100 days prior to regularly scheduled election information about the election to be used with the federal write-in absentee ballot and to provide a copy of such information to any UMOVA voter who requests it. Currently, this is a local responsibility. The bill also permits localities to use paper ballots for UMOVA voters who are eligible to vote only in federal elections. Localities are also permitted to obtain other evidence of mailing, rather than purchasing a certificate of mailing, when mailing absentee ballots to UMOVA voters. The section providing for an early absentee ballot for statewide offices is repealed, as it was rendered obsolete by 2011 legislation that expanded the use of federal write-in absentee ballots to all elections. This bill also contains technical amendments to reflect the administrative reorganization of the Department of Elections that took effect July 1, 2014.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

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

8. Fiscal Implications: The proposed legislation should not have a material fiscal impact on the agency. Any additional costs that would result from implementing this legislation would likely be absorbed by the agency. Additional costs that would be absorbed by the agency would include updating instructions and guidance documents to include translation, if needed, changes to the voter registration system, changes to web materials, printing and distribution of forms, additional support for staff to research Code sections and update forms impacted by the legislation, and training to assure officers of election and voters are aware of any new requirements. These costs have been built into recently approved contracts and projects; therefore, these developments would not result in a fiscal impact for the agency.

Localities may realize a cost savings by authorizing electronic evidence of mailing absentee ballots. The pricing of the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) services appear significantly less than the current per certificate mailing rate. Moreover, use of the IMb services has the potential to save localities even more on postage costs.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This legislation is identical to House Bill 2057 (Sickles).

c: Secretary of Administration