

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2017 General Assembly Session

Bill: HB 2343

Patron: Bell

Date: 1/23/2017

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:

Requires the Department of Elections to provide to the general registrars a list of registered voters who have been found through list comparisons and data-matching exchanges with other states to be registered in another state. The bill requires the general registrars, upon receipt of such lists, to send notice to the voter and provide a postage prepaid, pre-addressed return card by which the voter may state his current address and verify or dispute the out-of-state registration record. The general registrars are also required to contact the registration official of the state of the out-of-state registration record to request a copy of the voter's registration record in that state. If a voter returns the return card confirming his move from the Commonwealth or verifying his out-of-state registration record, or if the registration official provides a copy of the voter's registration record in that state and such record is dated subsequent to the voter's registration record in the Commonwealth, the bill requires the general registrars to cancel the voter's registration record. If a voter returns the return card confirming his address within the city or county of his registration or disputing the out-of-state registration record, the general registrar is required to so notify the registration official of the state of the voter's out-of-state registration record. If no return card is received within 30 days after the general registrar sends notice to the voter, the bill requires the general registrar to place the voter's name on inactive status in accordance with state and federal law.

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**Executive Summary:**

HB 2343 requires Department of Elections to provide a list of out-of-state registered voters to the local general registrar and defines the process for the general registrar to solve out-of-state registration issues in accordance with state and federal law. Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.01 - \$15,000.00. Localities noted that that the bill would have a negative fiscal impact because it increases mailing expenses, printing costs and staff time. Localities also noted that the costs could be higher or lower depending on the number of notifications received from the state and depending on the type(s) of elections occurring that year. Towns indicated that the bill would not have a fiscal impact as towns do not have voter registrar functions but instead rely on the county registrar.

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**Local Analysis:**

**Locality:** City of Danville

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$5,500.00

Local registrar estimates this could cost between \$3000-5000, with the higher end being during Presidential election years. Registrar believes this could be accomplished within normal business hours, and should there be a large volume, part-time employees could assist (estimated at \$500 for part-time overtime)

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Locality: City of Harrisonburg

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$500.00

If passed the city would see increased mailing expenses and extra staff time to accommodate the legislation.

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**Locality:** City of Lynchburg

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

This is a very difficult figure to guesstimate since there is no way to know each year how many voters will move out of state or how many will respond to confirmation mailings. The procedure the bill proposes is quite labor intensive so cost will include many facets such as the following which is based on a Department of Elections NCOA [National Change of Address] Out Jurisdiction Movers report from confirmation notices sent July 1, 2016 showing approximately 2,200 Lynchburg City voters moving out of our jurisdiction/state:

- Printed envelopes (cost of printing and envelopes)
- Printed return cards (cost of printing two sided and cards)
- Correspondence (cost of printing and paper)
- U.S. postage for each piece of mail sent in addition to cost of postage-paid return cards (could perhaps be up to three/four correspondences per voter – postage for each)
- Staff time taken to process mail to and from each voter and registrar’s office in the state of residence (labor cost per hour – approximately 15 minutes per voter)

Estimated Fiscal Impact: ? \$15,000 (based on 2,200 voters)

Analysis: Includes estimated cost of printing and supplies, up to four pieces of mail per voter including postage paid return cards and staff time required per voter for the complete process.

Please keep in mind that this is a rough estimate, it could be higher or lower. Voter response to NCOA mailings fluctuate greatly – last year we received double the amount received this year.

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Locality: City of Norfolk

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.10

Local impact is currently unknown at this time; however, there will likely be an increase in local expenditures. This bill will require additional staff time to cross reference and reconcile voter records and additional costs for mailings to voters. At this time it is not known how many duplicate records are received annually.

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**Locality:** Henrico County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$8,000.00

The cost estimate for this mandate is based on the high end of a range of \$2,000 to \$8,000. This is dependent on the number of notifications received from other states and the number of inactive voters on the registration list.

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Locality: Mecklenburg County

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$1,200.00

Currently the State Dept. of Elections is responsible. The burden is being placed on the locality again. Last election we did approximately 500 and that number will grow this year. Cost is a minimum of \$.92 per voter. This doesn't include staff time to track down and call other localities and then to file and/or scan the paper work.

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**Locality:** Town of Boones Mill

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$1.00

No impact on small towns like Boones Mill which don't have voter registrar functions of their own.

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Locality: Town of Christiansburg

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.01

As a Town, Christiansburg relies on the Montgomery County Registrar and would therefore have no costs association with this amendment.

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