

## Department of Planning and Budget 2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB932

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:** Hope

**3. Committee:** Counties, Cities and Towns

**4. Title:** County manager plan; election of board members by instant runoff voting.

**5. Summary:** Provides that, in a county operating under the county manager plan of government, elections to nominate candidates for and to elect candidates to the board of supervisors may be conducted by instant runoff voting, which the bill describes as the method of casting and tabulating votes in which (i) voters rank candidates in order of preference, (ii) tabulation proceeds in sequential rounds in which last-place candidates are defeated, and (iii) the candidate or candidates with the most votes in the final round are elected.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Indeterminate – see Item 8.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary – fiscal impact is indeterminate and pending a full review of all impacted systems by the Department of Elections. See Item 8.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** This legislation would allow the nomination and election of candidates to the board of supervisors in counties operating under the county manager plan, if so adopted by the board by ordinance. The instant runoff voting method would allow voters to rank candidates in order of preference. Ballots are initially counted as one vote for the candidate at the highest continuing ranking. In an election for exactly one office, if no candidate receives more than half of the total votes, the candidate with the lowest amount of votes is eliminated and those votes are redistributed to the voters' second preferred candidate, if indicated. If no additional preferences are noted, the ballot is not counted in subsequent rounds. Vote counting continues in this manner until one candidate receives more than half of the votes counting for candidates or until there are two or fewer candidates remaining. In an election for more than one office, a similar process is used until the number of continuing candidates whose vote totals exceed the election threshold is equal to the number of seats remaining to be filled.

Based on a preliminary analysis by the Department of Elections (ELECT), the agency indicates it may need to make system modifications on many of its existing systems, including the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS), election night results reporting, and secure electronic ballot delivery for overseas voters. Additional systems may be impacted but the full extent is pending a full review by ELECT.

ELECT estimates that the system changes identified thus far would require five contractors with approximately 2,000 hours of work each. Assuming an average contractor cost of \$120 per hour, ELECT estimates these modifications to cost approximately \$1.2 million and would take approximately 12 months to complete.

Additionally, ELECT would need to develop voter education materials so that voters are aware of the instant runoff process. The costs of developing and distributing these materials are currently indeterminate.

According to ELECT, all voting equipment approved for use in the Commonwealth would need to be recertified to determine if it can accept instant runoff voting and provide any information required. Counties operating under the county manager plan of government may incur costs if their voting machines are not capable of accepting instant runoff ballots and they adopt the instant runoff voting process for board of supervisors candidates.

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

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No.

**11. Other Comments:** None.

Date: February 12, 2018