

Department of Planning and Budget 2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** SB164

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed

Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. **Patron:** Wexton

3. **Committee:** Privileges and Elections

4. **Title:** Absentee voting; persons age 65 or older.

5. **Summary:** Entitles a person who will be age 65 or older on the day of an election to vote by absentee ballot in that election.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** No.

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** This bill would require an update to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) to establish a new reason code (category) to identify those voters 65 years or older are eligible to vote absentee. Under current law, voters 65 or older must qualify under one of the current reason to vote by absentee ballot. The agency would also have to update absentee forms, reports, and other VERIS functionality to accommodate the modified reason code. The Department of Elections estimates the cost of these updates to be \$8,814: \$2,500 for changes to VERIS; \$2,200 for changes to forms, web materials, and guidance documents; and \$4,114 to print and distribute new forms.

As stand-alone legislation, the Department of Elections considers implementation of this bill as “routine,” and does not require significant additional funding. The Department of Elections will review all electoral legislation likely to be enacted prior to the passage by each house. If the aggregate number of “routine” bills likely to pass either house is unusually large, it is possible that the Department of Elections will require additional resources. If so, the Department of Elections will identify the costs at that time.

Localities may also experience an increase in the total cost of processing the absentee ballots at the local registrar’s office, such as increased staff time needed to process in-person applicants and to review and issue ballots in response to applications submitted other than in person.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This bill is identical to SB4, SB277, and SB453, and a companion bill to HB186 and HB1134.

Date: January 24, 2018

File: SB164