

Department of Planning and Budget

2019 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB2716

House of Origin ☒ Introduced ☐ Substitute ☐ Engrossed
Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. Patron: Bagby

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Elections and voter registration; early voting; same day voter registration.

5. Summary: Provides for early voting beginning the twenty-first day prior to any general election, the seventh day prior to any special election held on a date other than the date of a general election, and the seventh day prior to any primary election and ending at 5:00 p.m. on the Saturday immediately preceding the election, during which any registered voter may vote without providing a reason or making a prior application for an absentee ballot. During the early voting period, any person who is qualified to register to vote shall be permitted to register to vote and cast a ballot in person in the office of the general registrar or at another location in the county or city approved by the electoral board. The bill also permits such persons to do so on the day of the election. The bill removes the current provisions for voting absentee in person but retains those provisions for voting an absentee ballot by mail, including the application requirement and the list of statutory reasons that allow a registered voter to vote absentee by mail.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

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

8. Fiscal Implications: As stand-alone legislation, the Department of Elections considers implementation of this bill as “routine,” and does not require additional funding. However, the agency 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 the agency will require additional resources. If so, the Department of Elections will identify the costs at that time.

This bill would require updates to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) to modify an existing reason code (category) to identify voters who vote early starting 21 days before the election and to allow for late registration. The agency would also have to update absentee and registration forms, reports, and other VERIS functionality to accommodate the modified reason code and late registration.

Localities would be responsible for administering the addition of voters to the rolls the day of election and during the early voting period and for the handling and counting of such ballots, pursuant to the procedures and instructions prescribed by the Department of Elections.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 1/22/2019