

**Commission on Local Government**

**Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact**

2020 General Assembly Session

**Bill:** HB1053

**Patron:** Levine

**Date:** 1/30/2020

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:**

Voting systems; voter-verifiable paper record. Requires any electronic voting system approved by the State Board of Elections to retain each paper ballot cast or to produce a voter-verifiable paper record of each ballot cast that is available for inspection and verification by the voter at the time the ballot is cast. The bill defines "voter-verifiable paper record" as a tangible record of the ballot cast by the voter that is printed on paper and is physically separate from any other similar document. For purposes of sealing and delivering to clerks of the circuit courts and retention by the clerks, such paper records are treated in the same manner as counted ballots.

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**Executive Summary:**

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.00 - \$143,400.00. A majority of localities noted that the bill would have little to no fiscal impact because they are in compliance with the provisions of the bill or they are towns and not responsible for voting registrar duties. They also noted that the current voting device does not produce verifiable receipts for voters and cost of this type of device would be very expensive. Of those localities that responded with a cost, noted that the cost would be related to ballot scanners, additional election officers, and additional costs that would be recognized in handling all additional ballot records and preparing them for delivery to the Clerk of the Court.

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**Local Analysis:**

**Locality:** City of Emporia

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Minimal impact. Retention and storage costs.

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**Locality:** City of Harrisonburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$10,000.00

The equipment needed would be determined by the Department of Elections but it is estimated to cost \$5,000-\$10,000.

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**Locality:** City of Roanoke

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$143,400.00

At the City of Roanoke, per discussion with the Registrar, the current model used in all voting sites throughout the city entails the use of one ballot scanner at each site. Passage of this bill would increase the wait time of voters and would likely necessitate having two ballot scanners at each voting site. With the introduction of this bill, the questions likely raised by voters would necessitate two additional election officers in each voting site.

The estimate below for ballot scanners is contingent on our current equipment being able to attain the requirements set forth in this bill. If new equipment were required we could expect to spend double the amount listed here for ballot scanners.

Not included here are the additional costs that would be recognized in handling all additional ballot records and preparing them for delivery to the Clerk of Court.

-- Voting equipment (ballot scanners) - 20 precincts plus 2 spare = 22 units X \$6,200 per scanner = \$136,400 (this would be a 1-time cost)  
-- Additional Election officers 2 per precinct - 2 officers x 20 precincts x \$175 rate = \$7,000 per election  
TOTAL = \$143,400

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**Locality:** City of Virginia Beach

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The current voting equipment owed and used in the City of Virginia Beach retains each paper ballot cast. Thus, our equipment would be in compliance with the proposed subsection 13 of 24.2-629, Subdivision B. This equipment does not produce voter-verifiable paper records, which is another option presented by this bill.

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**Locality:** City of Winchester

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

HB 1053 –This would require a “voter-verified paper record” of a voter’s ballot. Requires any electronic voting system approved by the State Board of Elections to retain each paper ballot cast or to produce a voter-verifiable paper record of each ballot cast that is available for inspection and verification by the voter at the time the ballot is cast. The wording of this bill is not in agreement with what the stated goal is, that is, to reconcile code to concur with what the State Board requires of optical scan machines in having to have paper back-up. Details being explored; for now, NONE of the current voting devices in Virginia produce a verifiable receipt for the voter, so requiring this would be very expensive for the industry, and that cost would be passed onto the localities if updated versions had to be purchased. The paper ballot itself is stored for posterity.

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**Locality:** Prince Edward County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

We already do this in Prince Edward County so no increased cost

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**Locality:** Town of Blacksburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The Town does not have responsibility for voting registrar.

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**Locality:** Town of Marion.

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

County function; no anticipated financial impact on Town

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**Locality:** Town of Scottsville

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The bill would have no direct cost to small towns. Small towns contract with county voter registrars to run their elections, generally on a flat fee which is not linked to the number of votes cast. This bill might require additional training, equipment, or staffing costs of county voter registrars, but the pass-through cost to small towns is indirect and likely minimal.

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**Locality:** Wise County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Wise County already complies with the language in this bill.  
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