

## Department of Planning and Budget 2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB439

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

**2. Patron:** VanValkenburg

**3. Committee:** Privileges and Elections

**4. Title:** Absentee ballots; materials included; information on proposed constitutional amendments.

**5. Summary:** Requires explanations of proposed constitutional amendments and information about statewide referenda to be included with the other materials sent with absentee ballots. These neutral explanations are prepared by a nonpartisan legislative agency, in consultation with appropriate state agencies and entities, and provided to the State Board of Elections for distribution to the voters. Currently, the explanations are made available at registration sites and are posted in polling places only.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** See Item 8.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** See Item 8.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** This bill would require the Department of Elections (ELECT) to provide a copy of the explanation of any proposed constitutional amendment or information about statewide referenda to be sent with each absentee ballot. This information is not currently included with absentee ballots but is provided to voters at registration sites and polling places. The cost to provide this was estimated using an average of the number of absentee ballots sent for the most recent presidential and gubernatorial elections, which was 2,687,304 and 1,284,932 absentee ballots respectively, an average of 1,986,118 ballots. ELECT received a retail price estimate of \$.0252 to print a regular 8½” by 11” tri-folded paper, with up to two amendments or referenda fitting on one paper. Based on these assumptions, the estimated cost of \$50,050 would be incurred each time up to two amendments or referenda are on a given ballot.

Currently, there are bills proposing two different constitutional amendments in the 2022 General Assembly Session. If this legislation is enacted, and if the bills for one or both proposed amendments were to pass and be put on the ballot in the November 2022 election, the estimated cost of this legislation to the general fund in fiscal year 2023 would be \$50,050 and a budget amendment to Item 89 of HB/SB 30 would be needed. This amount would be in addition to the \$307,000 that ELECT has identified as the fiscal impact of providing public notice for a referendum.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Virginia Department of Elections, State Board of Elections, and localities (General Registrars and Electoral Boards).

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

**11. Other Comments:** None.

Date: 1/28/2022