

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB1176

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

2. Patron: Wyatt

3. Committee: Privileges and Elections

4. Title: Elections; voter identification containing photograph required; who may register.

5. Summary: Requires presentation of a form of identification containing a photograph in order to vote and provides that a voter who does not have one of the required forms of identification is entitled to cast a provisional ballot. The bill repeals a provision that would permit any person who is qualified to register to vote to do so in person up to and including the day of the election and limits the persons who are entitled to register to vote after the close of registration records to members of a uniformed service on active duty, persons who are residing temporarily outside of the United States, and their spouses and dependents. The bill limits the period during which absentee voting in person is available from 45 days preceding the date of the election to the 14 days preceding the date of the election. The bill requires that absentee ballots returned by mail be returned to the office of the general registrar by the close of polls on election day and be postmarked on or before the Saturday preceding the date of the election. The bill eliminates the use of drop-off locations for the return of absentee ballots. The bill requires absentee ballot applications to contain the last four digits of the applicant's social security number.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes; Item 77.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary; see below.

8. Fiscal Implications: This bill would require the Department of Elections (ELECT) to make changes to various election processes: early voting, drop-off locations, mailed ballot deadlines, same-day registration, and voter identification. ELECT would need to update training guidelines, develop new processes, and create regulations to make these changes.

It is currently estimated that the bill's most significant fiscal impact will be the voter identification portion. ELECT is required to provide to each general register the equipment that would be used to obtain photographs and signatures that would be submitted to the department to create identification cards. ELECT estimates the cost of each set of camera and signature capture pad equipment to be approximately \$740 based on the retail cost of the equipment.

The bill allows the agency to contract out the production and distribution of the voter identification cards and ELECT currently estimates the retail cost to produce the identification cards to be \$8.35 per unit. While these retail costs are the best available estimates at this time, ELECT anticipates actual costs once bid out will likely be less.

The initial estimated one-time cost to purchase camera and signature pad equipment for all localities using the above cost assumptions is \$98,420. The number of localities that may still possess working equipment provided for previous photo identification requirements is unknown and the actual number of localities in need of such equipment may be less. Ongoing annual costs to produce identification cards for an estimated 2,000 voters is \$16,700. In addition to the card production, ongoing costs are expected to replace an estimated five percent of equipment annually. Assuming a replacement rate of 7 units per year, approximately five percent, ongoing equipment replacement costs would be \$5,180. This brings total estimated general fund costs to \$115,120 in fiscal year 2025 and \$21,880 in ongoing annual costs thereafter.

The proposed legislation is not expected to have a fiscal impact on the Department of Motor Vehicles.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.

January 23, 2024