

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

February 26, 2003

TO: Honorable Mary Denny, Chair, House Committee on Elections

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB441 by Raymond (Relating to authorizing the period for early voting by personal appearance to be increased.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB441, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$286,454) through the biennium ending August 31, 2005.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

This bill authorizes a governing entity to begin early voting by personal appearance as early as 31 days prior to election day, but no later than 17 days before election day.

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2004	(\$286,454)
2005	\$0
2006	(\$286,454)
2007	\$0
2008	(\$286,454)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1
2004	(\$286,454)
2005	\$0
2006	(\$286,454)
2007	\$0
2008	(\$286,454)

Fiscal Analysis

This bill increases the early voting by personal appearance period to begin as early as 31 days prior to election day, but no later than 17 days before election day.

Methodology

The only component of early voting that is paid for by the state is the costs of ballots for primary and runoff elections. The Secretary of State currently spends \$2,864,537 on ballots for these elections.

The agency estimates that an increased early voting period will result in a 10 percent increase in early voting and a cost of \$286,454 a biennium for the additional ballots.

Local Government Impact

There would be significant costs to local governments to implement the bill, if they chose to do so.

The Bexar County elections administrator reported that they pay a combined total of \$25 per hour for one elections judge and three elections clerks. The average number of hours for early voting is 132. With approximately 35 early voting sites in Bexar County, the cost for one election would be \$115,500, or approximately \$577,500 over five years. Early voting for two primary elections would increase the estimate to \$807,500. Additional costs for ballots, supplies, and logistics costs would increase the estimate to \$900,000.

The Fort Bend County elections administrator reported that implementing the bill would cost the county \$75,000 per year, and \$375,000 over five years. The El Paso County elections administrator reported that implementing the bill would cost the county \$5,000 per additional day of early voting, for an approximate cost of \$70,000 per election. The Victoria County elections administrator reported that the normal cost of \$8,000 to \$12,000 per early voting session would increase by \$4,000 to \$6,000 per session.

The election administrators in Dallas, Williamson and Tom Green counties reported that their election costs would double.

Source Agencies: 307 Secretary Of State

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