

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 20, 2005

TO: Honorable Robert Duncan, Chair, Senate Committee on State Affairs

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Deputy Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB2759 by Taylor (Relating to requirements for county election precincts.), **Committee Report 2nd House, Substituted**

No fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend Sections 42.001 and 43.002, Election Code, to require a commissioners court in a county with a population of more than 175,000 to select polling places in locations so that a voter of the precinct would not have to travel more than 25 miles from the voter's residence to reach the polling place for the precinct.

The bill would amend Section 42.006(d), Election Code, to establish that in a county in which a voting system has been adopted for use in the general election for state and county officers, the maximum number of registered voters that may be assigned to a precinct would be 5,000. All other maximums listed would be deleted from statute. Current statute provides a maximum of between 3,000 and 5,000 registered voters per precinct, depending on the population of the county.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2005.

Local Government Impact

The fiscal impact of the requirement to establish polling places within 25 miles of a voter's residence would vary by county. This provision of the bill would apply to 21 counties. Bexar, Harris, and Travis counties report that the county already meets or exceeds this requirement, and therefore, there would be no fiscal impact. Lubbock County reports, however, that because residents are spread out in distance around the county that meeting the 25-mile requirement would create a significant fiscal impact.

The proposed change to Section 42.006(d) would provide flexibility for a county in determining how many precincts to establish. According to a sampling of county election administrators, raising the limit on the number of registered voters per precinct would allow the county to establish fewer precincts, which would result in a savings in the cost of precinct officials and equipment required.

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 307 Secretary of State

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