

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 82ND LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 5, 2011

TO: Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor, Senate
Honorable Joe Straus, Speaker of the House, House of Representatives

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

IN RE: SB14 by Fraser (Relating to requirements to vote, including presenting proof of identification; providing criminal penalties.), **Conference Committee Report**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB14, Conference Committee Report: a negative impact of (\$2,024,000) through the biennium ending August 31, 2013.

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

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2012	(\$2,024,000)
2013	\$0
2014	\$0
2015	\$0
2016	\$0

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund 1
2012	(\$2,024,000)
2013	\$0
2014	\$0
2015	\$0
2016	\$0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would exempt certain disabled voters from presenting additional identification for voting, other than the voter registration certificate, if the voter submits written document from the United States Social Security Administration evidencing the applicant has a disability or the Department of Veterans Affairs evidencing the applicant has a disability rating of at least 50 percent along with a statement that the applicant does not have an acceptable form of identification. The bill would also require voter registration certificates to contain an indication that the disabled voter is exempted from presenting additional identification, other than the voter registration certificate, before being accepted for voting.

The bill would require the voter registrar of each county to provide a notice of identification

requirements for voting with each initial voter registration certificate or renewal registration certificate issued. The Secretary of State (SOS) and the voter registrar of each county that maintains a website would be required to post on their websites, in each language in which voter registration materials are available, a notice of the identification requirements, and county clerks would be required to post a physical copy in each language voter registration materials are available. SOS would be required to prescribe the wording of these notices. SOS would also be required to establish a statewide effort to educate voters regarding the identification requirements for voting.

The bill would require training standards to include instructions on the acceptance and handling of the identification presented by a voter to an election officer and each election clerk would be required to complete this training.

The presiding judge at each polling place would be required to post in a prominent location outside of the location a list of the acceptable forms of identification and the list would have to be separate from any other notices.

The Secretary of State would be required to develop standards for accepting voters when determining whether the voter's name on the voter's form of identification is substantially similar when the name does not match exactly with the name on the list of registered voters and the voter submits an affidavit stating that the voter is the person on the list of registered voters.

The Secretary of State would be required to prescribe the wording for written notifications of the identification requirements for voting beginning with elections held after January 1, 2012 and election officers would be required to provide this written notification of voting identification requirements and information on obtaining identification without a fee to voters who do not meet identification requirements. This section would expire September 1, 2017.

The Secretary of State would be required to prescribe procedures for voters who provisionally vote without proper identification to present proof of identification to the voter registrar not later than the sixth day after the date of the election.

The bill would require the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to issue an election identification certificate (certificate) to a person who states that the person is obtaining the certificate to meet voting identification requirements and presents a valid voter registration certificate or submits a valid voter registration application. DPS would be prohibited from collecting a fee for the certificate or a duplicate certificate. The certificate would not be allowed to be used or accepted as a personal identification certificate. The certificate would be required to be similar in form to, but distinguishable in color from, a driver's license and a personal identification certificate. DPS and the Secretary of State would be allowed to cooperate in developing the form and appearance of the certificate. DPS would determine the expiration date of the certificate except that a certificate issued to a person 70 years of age or older would not expire.

The bill would repeal Sections 63.007 and 63.008 of the Election Code related to voters with incorrect certificates who are not on the voter list and voters without certificates who are not on the voter list.

The Secretary of State (SOS) would be required to adopt the training standards and to develop training materials as soon as practicable after September 1, 2011. Each county clerk would be required to provide a session of training using the standards adopted by and the materials developed by SOS as soon as practicable as well.

The bill would change an offense under this section after January 1, 2012 to a second degree felony from a third degree felony unless the person is convicted of an attempt, in which case, the offense would be a state jail felony instead of a Class A misdemeanor.

The bill would expand the uses of state funds disbursed under Chapter 19 of the Election Code to include additional expenses related to coordinating voter registration drives or other activities designed to expand voter registration. This section would expire January 1, 2013.

The bill would state that if any provision in the bill is found by a court to be invalid, the remainder of

the bill would be allowed to stand alone.

Certain sections would be effective September 1, 2011. The remainder of the bill would be effective January 1, 2012.

Methodology

The fiscal impact of the bill excluding technology costs is estimated to be \$2,000,000 million for fiscal year 2012 out of the General Revenue Fund. The estimate includes \$0.5 million to research and develop ways to inform the public of the new identification requirements. Additional costs are estimated to be \$1.5 million for media advertisements: television (\$750,000), radio (\$300,000), print (\$300,000), and internet (\$150,000). The Secretary of State indicates that federal funds associated with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) may be available for use but the agency would first need to verify this with the federal government.

The Secretary of State would also be required to prescribe the wording for voter identification requirement notifications in each language voter registration materials are available, develop training materials on voter identification requirements, and develop standards for accepting voters when determining whether the voter's name on the voter's form of identification is substantially similar to the name on the list of registered voters. It is assumed that any fiscal implication associated with these responsibilities could be absorbed within existing resources.

The fiscal impact of expanding the uses of funds disbursed under Chapter 19 of the Election Code to include coordinating voter registration drives or other activities designed to expand voter registration is unknown because it is not known how many voter registration drives or other activities designed to expand voter registration would occur.

The fiscal impact of the costs from the prohibition of DPS to collect a fee for an election identification certificate and duplicate certificate issued to a person seeking the certificate for the purpose of voting is unknown because it is not known how many people would make a request for an election identification certificate for voting.

Technology

The technology fiscal impact of the bill is estimated to be \$24,000 for programming costs associated with creating an indicator on voter registration certificates for voters with certain disabilities. The notification would inform election officers at polling places that voters with certain disabilities are exempted from presenting additional identification other than the voter registration certificate. The Secretary of State indicates that federal funds associated with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) may be available for use but the agency would first need to verify this with the federal government.

Local Government Impact

The bill would require counties to notify registered voters of changes online if the county maintains a website, at polling locations, and included with voter registration certificates. Election clerks would be required to undergo training regarding accepted forms of voter identification. The bill would also require an applicant who wishes to receive an exemption from certain voter identification requirements on the basis of disability to include with the person's application documentation that the applicant has been determined to have a disability.

Texas Association of Counties (TAC) gathered the following information from counties:

Bexar County stated that due to limited space on current registration certificates, larger cards would be necessary resulting in additional costs of \$381,256 for cards, printing and postage. Bexar County also reported costs of \$1,500 for providing voter ID informational posters in Spanish and English in 24-point font, and \$2,500 in new costs per election regarding printing new forms and provisional envelopes for information for voters not accepted for voting because of failure to present the required identification. Bexar County also anticipates \$50,000 in new costs associated with scanning disability

affidavits and another \$50,000 associated with being required to validate provisional envelopes.

Brazoria County estimated that the county clerk would be responsible \$1,500 in new costs to reprint provisional envelopes. The Brazoria County Tax Assessor-Collector anticipates \$40,159 in new costs associated with printing provisional envelopes, in addition to the costs of printing new voter information (Brazoria County reported that these costs would vary depending on the specific requirements of the information to be provided).

Tarrant County anticipated a one-time cost of \$8,000 to reprint provisional balloting materials and provide new notices.

Comal County anticipated approximately \$30,000 in new costs per election for staff at voting precincts and the early voting ballot board. The Comal County Tax Office reported costs of \$2,860 to print identification requirements, \$22,700 for envelopes, and \$19,880 for postage to comply with the provisions of the bill.

Source Agencies:

LBB Staff: JOB, SD, MS, BTA