

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 26, 2015

TO: Honorable Jodie Laubenberg, Chair, House Committee on Elections

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB2889 by Hughes (Relating to the verification of citizenship of an applicant for voter registration.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB2889, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$1,253,172) through the biennium ending August 31, 2017.

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
2016	(\$682,046)
2017	(\$571,126)
2018	(\$571,126)
2019	(\$571,126)
2020	(\$571,126)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2015
	1	
2016	(\$682,046)	10.0
2017	(\$571,126)	10.0
2018	(\$571,126)	10.0
2019	(\$571,126)	10.0
2020	(\$571,126)	10.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend the Election Code to require the Secretary of State (SOS) to verify the citizenship of an applicant to register to vote. The bill would also require SOS to adopt rules and prescribe procedures for implementation.

The bill would require a registrar to make a determination of an applicant's submitted voter registration application made through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to ensure the applicant meets the citizenship requirements and that determination shall be made no later than the seventh day after submission. Otherwise, the voter registrar would be required to forward the information to the SOS and SOS would be required to verify citizenship with DPS and then notify the voter registrar.

The bill would require that if an applicant does not provide proof of citizenship within a certain period of time, the voter registrar would be required to reject the application and notify SOS and SOS would be required to keep a list of these applicants.

The bill would repeal Section 13.041 of the Election Code relating to the effect of submission of application and Section 13.143(d) and (e) of the Election Code relating to effective date of registration.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.

Methodology

Under the provisions of the bill, the SOS indicated the fiscal impact would be \$682,046 in fiscal year 2016, and \$571,126 in each fiscal year from 2017-2020. Costs include salaries for 10.0 FTEs, other operating, professional services, equipment, and benefits. The SOS would be required to update the Texas Election Administration Management System (TEAM) to accommodate the new workflow.

In 2014, 700,000 applications to register to vote were processed. In 2013, 500,000 applications were processed. In 2012, a presidential year, 1,600,000 applications were processed. SOS assumes the same number of applications would be submitted and require certification of citizenship.

The SOS estimates the bill provisions would require ten Program Specialists I (10.0 FTEs) with a combined fiscal year cost of \$562,296 for salaries (\$420,000) and related benefits (\$142,296). The additional program specialists would be required to process the applications and verify citizenship of applicants.

The Department of Public Safety indicates a minimal cost to implement the provisions of the bill.

Technology

There would be a technology impact related to computer hardware, software, and coding changes to the TEAM System estimated to be \$52,000 in fiscal year 2016, and \$0 in each subsequent fiscal year.

Local Government Impact

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

Source Agencies: 307 Secretary of State, 405 Department of Public Safety

LBB Staff: UP, AG, EP, CM, JAW