

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

Legislative Office Building, Room 5200

Hartford, CT 06106 ♦ (860) 240-0200

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa>

sHB-7228

AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REFORMS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS IN THIS STATE.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Cost	1,320,000	1,320,000
Secretary of the State	GF - Cost	396,010	396,010
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	161,216	161,216

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Various Municipalities	Cost	90,000	90,000
Various Municipalities	Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Explanation

This bill makes various changes to the state's election laws resulting in the fiscal impacts outlined below.

Section 2 of the bill expands the Secretary of the State's (SOTS) oversight role in the counting of absentee ballots requiring SOTS to hire four additional staff² at a cost of \$313,955 in FY 26 and FY 27 with an associated fringe cost of \$127,811. These positions are required to complete an assessment of proposed central counting locations within

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

² This includes a Staff Attorney I, two Elections Officers, and an Administrative Assistant.

the two-day timeline required by the bill.

This section additionally, empowers SOTS to require municipalities to appoint additional absentee ballot counters under certain circumstances resulting in a potential cost to municipalities. The exact cost will vary by municipality and depends on the number of additional counters appointed.

Sections 3 and 4 of the bill require municipal registrars to attempt to contact voters to whose ballots were rejected due to insufficient identification or who failed to sign the inner-envelope resulting in a cost to municipalities of \$15,000 in FY 26 and FY 27. This cost is associated with the expected additional labor hours to comply with this section. The exact cost will vary by municipality and will depending on the number of ballots that require correction.

Sections 6 and 7 of the bill moves forward the required reporting time for absentee, early voting, and same day registration ballot counters on the date of the contest resulting in a cost to municipalities of \$45,000. This cost is associated with at least two additional hours of labor required as a result of these sections. The exact cost will vary by municipality and depend on the additional hours required, and per hour cost of election workers.

Sections 8-10 of the bill requires SOTS to supply and oversee the municipal petition process requiring SOTS to hire one additional employee³ at a cost of \$82,055 in FY 26 and FY 27 with an associate fringe benefit cost of \$33,405. This cost is associated with additional oversight of the petition process, which will require specialized knowledge on the municipal level to ensure each petition complies with local requirements for municipal office.

Section 14 requires the SOTS to conduct a test and demonstration of the state's election system and requires one registrar from each municipality to attend resulting in a cost of \$15,000 to municipalities.

³ This includes one Elections Officer.

This cost is associated with additional labor hours to attend and participate in the demonstration.

Section 15 of the bill requires the placement of a poster at certain early voting locations to inform voters how to locate their voting district resulting in a cost to municipalities of approximately \$15,000. This cost is associated with the design and printing of the posters. The exact cost is expected to vary by town.

Section 16 of the bill appropriates \$1,320,000 to SOTS for early voting in FY 26 and FY 27 resulting in a cost to the General Fund.

The remaining sections of the bill make a variety of changes that result in no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation, salary increases and municipal labor costs. The appropriation described in section 16 concludes at the end of FY 27.