

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 553 - SB 1210

March 10, 2015

SUMMARY OF BILL: Specifies that the persons authorized pursuant to current law to vote absentee may do so without providing evidence of identification; adds that a registered voter may vote absentee by mail according to the procedures outlined in current law in any primary election, election, or runoff election. Specifies that a registered voter will not be required to provide a reason in order to cast an absentee ballot by mail, but will have to submit a legible scanned copy of evidence of identification with the application for a by-mail absentee ballot.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Expenditures –

\$1,184,400/FY15-16 and Every Four Years Thereafter

Increase Local Expenditures -

\$2,238,800/FY16-17 and Every Two Years Thereafter*

\$1,184,400/FY17-18 and Every Four Years Thereafter*

Assumptions:

- The County Technical Advisory Service (CTAS) reports the bill could result in significant mailing and ballot processing expenses to counties.
- Currently, registered voters are authorized to vote by absentee ballot under specific circumstances, such as, absence from the county on Election Day, observance of a religious holiday, or serving as an election official.
- Costs vary by county based on the size of the county, the number of registered voters, and the specific needs of each county.
- Based on information collected from counties by the Division of Elections, there will be an increase in expenditures for printing and mailing costs. Some counties will require additional staff to process additional absentee ballots.
- Based on the results of the survey of counties, the statewide cost per election is estimated to be \$1,184,400.
- In FY15-16, the state will be responsible for these increased expenditures due to the Presidential Preference Primary; as a result, an increase in state expenditures of \$1,184,400 in FY15-16. These expenditures will be paid by the state once every four years thereafter.
- In FY16-17, and every two years thereafter, local governments will be responsible for these expenditures due to August and November general elections. As a result, the

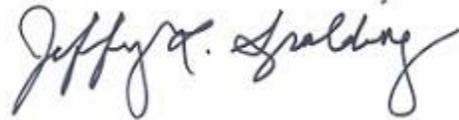
increase in local government expenditures is estimated to be \$2,368,800 (\$1,184,400 x 2 elections).

- In FY17-18, and every four years thereafter, local governments will be responsible for these expenditures due to May county primary elections. As a result, the increase in local expenditures is estimated to be \$1,184,400.

*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: *no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Jeffrey L. Spalding, Executive Director

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