



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number: S. 0036 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Polling Locations
Requestor: Senate Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s): Welsh
Impact Date: January 27, 2025

Fiscal Impact Summary

The bill requires county boards of voter registration and elections to establish the location of regular polling places for each designated precinct according to specific criteria. This bill also removes an existing requirement for the General Assembly or State Election Commission (SEC) to make alterations ensuring no precinct has more than 1,500 qualified electors. Further, it requires additional notice posted on state and county websites for voters whose polling place is unavailable due to an emergency.

This bill will have no expenditure impact for the SEC as the agency can manage the additional responsibilities due to this bill with existing staff and within existing appropriations.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) contacted the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) and all counties to determine the local expenditure impact of this bill. Based on the responses received, the local expenditure impact for municipalities is undetermined, depending upon election costs associated with any alterations to the locations of existing polling places. Additionally, responses received indicated counties are already meeting the bill's requirements. Therefore, the local expenditure impact on counties is expected to be minimal and managed within current appropriations.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 14, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill amends provisions related to the establishment of polling places. Under current law, the General Assembly is responsible for designating polling places. The bill requires county boards of voter registration and elections to establish the location of regular polling places for each designated precinct according to specific criteria. This bill also removes an existing requirement for the General Assembly or State Election Commission (SEC) to make alterations ensuring no precinct has more than 1,500 qualified electors. However, SEC is required to report to the General Assembly the names of all polling precincts by county that have more than 3,000 registered electors. Further, it requires additional notice posted on state and county websites for voters whose polling place is unavailable due to an emergency.

SEC anticipates it can manage the additional responsibilities due to this bill with existing staff and within existing appropriations. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact for SEC.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

This bill amends existing provisions related to the establishment of polling precincts and polling places. Under current law, the General Assembly is responsible for designating polling locations. The bill requires county boards of voter registration and elections to establish the location of regular polling places for each designated precinct according to specific criteria. Specifically, it requires at least one polling place within each precinct unless a county board of voter registration and election determines no suitable location is available. If a suitable location for a polling place is not available within a precinct, the bill requires a polling place to be established within five miles of the precinct boundary. Further, it requires additional notice posted on state and county websites for voters whose polling place is unavailable due to an emergency.

RFA contacted MASC to determine the local expenditure impact for municipalities. MASC anticipates this bill may result in an increase or decrease to a municipality's election costs depending on the extent the locations of polling places are altered by a county's board of voter registration and elections. The municipal impact may be greatest for approximately thirty-eight municipalities who conduct their own elections and have traditionally worked with their county's legislative delegation to establish the location of polling places. Therefore, the local expenditure impact for municipalities is undetermined.

RFA also contacted all counties to determine the local expenditure impact for counties. The counties of Beaufort, Horry, Florence, and Kershaw provided a response. Beaufort, Horry, and Kershaw specified their jurisdictions are already in compliance with the requirements of the bill. Additionally, Florence anticipates this bill will have little to no fiscal impact for Florence County Voter Registration and Elections. All respondents anticipate this bill will have no expenditure impact for their counties. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on counties.

Local Revenue

N/A



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