Fiscal Note

Fiscal Services Division

HF 2243 – Voter Registration, Online (LSB 5061HH)
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Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

House File 2243 permits electronic voter registration from the State Commissioner of Elections' Internet site.

The Bill allows an eligible elector to apply to register to vote by electronic means by completing and submitting an electronic voter registration form provided on the Internet site for the Secretary of State as the State Commissioner of Elections. The electronic form must provide all information that is currently required on printed voter registration forms.

The Bill requires that a registrant attest to a statement that lists each voter registration eligibility requirement, that the registrant meets all of the requirements, and requires the electronic signature of the registrant, consistent with Iowa Code section **554D.103**, as part of the uniform electronic transactions Act. A registrant using the electronic voter registration form must have an Iowa driver's license, Iowa nonoperator's identification card, a social security number, or a unique identifying number assigned to them for registration purposes.

The Bill requires that the electronic registration from be accompanied by a Statement featured prominently in boldface capital letters informing the registrants of the penalty for providing false information on a voter registration application.

The Bill extends the category for the crime of voter registration fraud to include fraudulent electronic registration. Registration fraud is a class D felony.

The Bill takes effect January 1, 2015.

Background and Assumptions

Fiscal Information

The Secretary of State will be required to make upgrades to the Statewide Voter Registration System, including hardware, software, scanning equipment, training and education expense.

Correctional Information

In the five-year period January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2013, there was one case of voter fraud disposed in the Iowa courts, with that one case resulting in a dismissal. Please refer to the **Correctional Impact Memo**, dated January 30, 2014, for information related to costs by crime class. The memo provides a range of costs based on actual costs and length of stay plus certain assumptions. A range of costs is provided for nonviolent crimes. The costs for the crime in **HF 2243** may be at the lower end of the range ($4,800) because it is likely the offender will receive probation supervision in the community rather than a sentence to state prison.

Minority Data Information

Please refer to the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) memo addressed to the General Assembly, Minority Impact Memo, dated January 30, 2014, for information related to minorities in the criminal justice system. To the extent this Bill results in more convictions, there may be a disproportionate impact on African Americans.

Summary of Impacts

Fiscal Impact

HF 2243 is estimated to require the expenditure, by the Secretary of State from General Funds, of an additional $250,000 during FY 2015. This includes training and education expenses of approximately $2,000.

HF 2243 does not provide additional funding.

Correctional Impact

The correctional impact of this Bill is expected to be minimal given the infrequency of convictions.

Minority Impact

To the extent this Bill results in more convictions, there may be a minority impact. However, this is unlikely given the infrequency of convictions. To the extent this Bill may be applied to convicted felons, it might have a disproportionate impact on African Americans.

Sources

Secretary of State
Department of Human Rights, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Division
Iowa State Association of Counties

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

March 3, 2014

The fiscal note for this Bill was prepared pursuant to **Joint Rule 17** and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.