

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 7833

BILL NUMBER: SB 477

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 15, 2003

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Polling place and voting machine accessibility.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Lawson C

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

**FUNDS AFFECTED: GENERAL
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL**

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: The bill requires each county election board to conduct training and educational meetings for precinct election officers. The bill requires the meeting to include information related to making polling places and voting systems accessible to elderly voters. The bill requires voting systems to meet accessibility requirements not later than January 1, 2006. The bill requires the circuit court clerk rather than the county executive to designate polling places unless the county adopts an ordinance to the contrary. The bill establishes standards for accessible facilities and accessible voting systems. The bill makes technical changes.

Effective Date: July 1, 2003.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *Summary:* The bill requires the co-directors of the Election Division to determine whether or not a special polling place must be established in a county with regard to accessibility for disabled voters. The provision would increase the administrative responsibilities of the Election Division.

Background: As of November 4, 2002, the Election Division of the Office of the Secretary of State employed 12 persons, 11 full-time and 1 intermittent.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Designation of Polling Places-* Except under passage of an ordinance to the contrary, the bill would require the circuit court clerk to designate polling places instead of the county executive. The provision would create additional administrative responsibilities for the circuit court clerk's

office. The impact of this provision is indeterminable and would depend on local action.

Training of Election Workers- County election boards would be required to have certain precinct election officers trained on voting equipment. Some counties currently allow a minimal per diem of approximately \$10 to \$15 to attend a training session. As counties with optical scan equipment are already required by state law to hold training sessions for inspectors and sheriffs, it is believed that the fiscal impact of this provision would be minimal. Absentee voter boards would be required to attend a training session before an election. Current law allows counties the option of providing training sessions for members of absentee voter boards.

Voting System Accessibility- The bill would require each county to have disabled voter accessibility on at least one voting machine per polling place by January 1, 2006. Under Federal regulations, disabled voting areas would be required to have wheelchair access, and various audio and enhanced visual instructions for the operation of the voting system. The estimated impact to local expenditures is currently indeterminable. *This fiscal impact statement will be updated when additional information is available.*

Background: During the 2000 general election, Indiana had approximately 4,400 polling places.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Election Division.

Local Agencies Affected: Office of the circuit court clerk; County election boards.

Information Sources: Indiana Election Division; Various County Circuit Court Clerks/Election Boards; *State of Indiana HRM Detail Staffing Report, 11/04/2002.*

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