

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

200 W. Washington, Suite 301
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 233-0696
<http://www.in.gov/legislative>

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 7145

BILL NUMBER: HB 1509

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 23, 2009

BILL AMENDED: Feb 19, 2009

SUBJECT: Various Election Law Matters.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. GiaQuinta

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: 2nd Reading - 1st House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) *Absentee Ballot Voting*- The bill permits a voter who is qualified to vote in person to vote by absentee ballot. The bill removes all other qualifications for a voter to vote by absentee ballot except for a voter with disabilities who is unable to make a voting mark on the ballot or sign the absentee ballot secrecy envelope. (Such a disabled voter is currently required to vote before an absentee voter board.)

Elimination of Vote Center Statute- The bill repeals the voter center statute.

Effective Date: (Amended) Upon passage; July 1, 2009.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Absentee Ballot Voting*- County election boards, particularly counties with direct recording electronic voting systems, would require additional paper ballots for voters choosing to vote absentee. Therefore, this provision would increase election board ballot expenditures. Additional local expenditures would depend on the number of additional ballots ordered by counties in future elections. Ballots cost approximately 30 to 32 cents each.

(Revised) *Elimination of Vote Center Statute*- This provision could significantly impact the election expenditures of counties that have pilot vote centers. If those counties had to return to a precinct-based election, they would face an increase in precinct election board member per diem and food costs. Travel costs

would increase for more inspectors returning ballots to the county seat. County election officials would have to have enough voting systems in place to cover every precinct, which could require additional upkeep costs (for software or maintenance) than currently may be expended. Additionally, the pilot counties would have to return to the use of printed poll lists, which would also increase expenditures.

Background- Expenses to run an election include: precinct election board per diem, rental of a facility for polling (if necessary), and/or voting equipment (if necessary). Based on a small sample of Indiana counties, per diem for election board members ranges from \$65 to \$160 for inspectors and from \$40 to \$100 for judges, clerks, and sheriffs. Tippecanoe County paid \$170 per vote center inspector vs. \$160 per precinct inspectors.

Tippecanoe County Vote Center Expenses- Tippecanoe County paid \$10,750 for electronic polling software for the vote centers it currently uses. The county estimates it costs approximately \$1,782 to produce paper poll lists for an election. During the 2007 municipal election, Tippecanoe County established 22 vote centers, replacing 52 precinct polling locations. During the 2008 general election, the number of vote centers was reduced to 20. The county estimates that the use of vote centers reduced the number of persons needed to run an election by almost half during the 2007 municipal election.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected:

Local Agencies Affected: County election boards; vote center pilot counties.

Information Sources: Linda Phillips, Tippecanoe County Circuit Court Clerk.

Fiscal Analyst: Chris Baker, 317-232-9851.