



**Fiscal Estimate Narratives**  
**ELB 1/15/02**

LRB Number 01-2256/1	Introduction Number AB-710	Estimate Type Original
<b>Subject</b> Eliminate same day voter registration		

**Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate**

It is difficult to measure the costs saved by eliminating late registration at the municipal clerk's office and Election Day registration at the polling place. It is also difficult to project the increased costs that will be assumed by state and local government to comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). This description provides some background for understanding the source of costs and savings associated with the legislation.

Wisconsin's estimated voting age population for the November 2000 general election was 3,930,000. 2,619,184 voters cast a ballot in that election. 411,656 voters registered to vote or amended their registration at the polling place on Election Day. 32,014 voters registered in the municipal clerk's office between the close of registration on the 2nd Wednesday (October 25, 2000) before the election and the day before the election.

Voter registration is not required in municipalities with a population of less than 5,000. Approximately 325 of Wisconsin's 1,850 municipalities have voter registration. Approximately 76% of the voting age population reside in those 325 municipalities.

Municipal clerks and poll workers report that it is very time consuming to register voters at the polls. A voter must provide a current form of identification and complete a short form that requests detailed information about the voter's name and residence, along with general information about age and citizenship. Voters who do not have to register at the polls simply state their name and address to the poll workers and receive a ballot. There is no requirement to show identification except for those voters registering on Election Day.

Poll workers maintain a separate list of voters who register on Election Day. Following the election, the information is entered into the municipal voter registration system and a confirmation notice is sent out to the address listed on the voter registration card. If a confirmation notice is returned it is turned over to the district attorney for investigation.

This legislation would eliminate the costs associated with gathering voter registration information at the polls except in the case of voters that move within the ward served by the polling place or voters that claim to be registered and vote by certification. This would mean a reduction in poll workers and less work after the election updating the voter registration system with new names. The system would still have to be updated for voter history information and the comparatively lesser number of Election Day changes.

The state and municipalities will be required to assume additional costs to comply with the NVRA. State agencies providing motor vehicle services, public assistance, services to persons with disabilities and other agencies designated by the state's chief election officer will have to offer the opportunity to persons receiving those services to register to vote. The agency personnel will have to be trained in the registration process. Agency personnel must maintain records of the number of clients that registered to vote and declined the opportunity to register. The registration forms must be sent to the appropriate municipality where the voter resides.

Determining the municipality where a person lives is not an easy task. The street or postal address may not reflect the municipality where the voter resides. This will lead to delays in getting voter registration information to the appropriate municipality.

The municipal clerk must add this information to the voter registration system and send out confirmation notices to the newly registered voters. The clerk must also maintain records and report information to the State Elections Board so that it can prepare the required biennial reports to the Federal Election Commission (FEC).

Under the provisions of the NVRA, the municipality is limited in its ability to remove voters from the voter

registration system. This results in a very large voter file that must be segregated between active and inactive voters. The municipality must maintain a system for permitting voters that are improperly removed or never added to the list to vote on Election Day.

The additional costs include the expense associated with adding requirements for state agency personnel to process voter registration information, maintain records and distribute the forms to the appropriate municipal clerk. A list of states with a voting age population close to that of Wisconsin is set out below along with the number of transactions at the DMV, public assistance, disability services and other agencies.

State VAP DMV Public Disability Other Total  
Assistance Services

Wisconsin 3,930,000

Arizona 3,625,000 158,993 32,137 10,613 202,507 404,250

Maryland 3,925,000 192,934 32,250 381 70,025 295,590

Missouri 4,105,000 414,686 51,951 721 522,455 989,813

Tennessee 4,221,000 134,202 49,636 No data 195,832 379,670

Washington 4,368,000 266,794 22,167 1,909 154,438 445,308

This provides some indication of the number of transactions that other state employees will assume under the NVRA. This will increase the amount of time state employees must devote to face to face customer transactions.

Many states developed a statewide voter registration system to reduce the costs of managing this information. This is a requirement that may be imposed by federal law based on congressional election reform efforts. H.R. 3295, S. 565. Our preliminary estimate for developing an interactive statewide voter registration system is \$4,000,000. This is based on very informal discussion with other states and vendors.

### **Long-Range Fiscal Implications**

The legislation imposes significant unquantifiable long term costs in terms of increased work load for state and local government employees.

## Fiscal Estimate Worksheet - 2001 Session

Detailed Estimate of Annual Fiscal Effect

Original     
  Updated     
  Corrected     
  Supplemental

<b>LRB Number</b> 01-2256/1		<b>Introduction Number</b> AB-710	
<b>Subject</b>			
Eliminate same day voter registration			
<b>I. One-time Costs or Revenue Impacts for State and/or Local Government (do not include in annualized fiscal effect):</b>			
One time costs include design, publication and distribution of voter information and education materials. Forms and training will have to be developed for municipal and state agency employees. A detailed analysis of these costs has not been developed. The Elections Board recommends that \$25,000 be set aside for these costs.			
<b>II. Annualized Costs:</b>		<b>Annualized Fiscal Impact on funds from:</b>	
		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
<b>A. State Costs by Category</b>			
State Operations - Salaries and Fringes		\$	
(FTE Position Changes)			
State Operations - Other Costs			
Local Assistance			
Aids to Individuals or Organizations			
<b>TOTAL State Costs by Category</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>B. State Costs by Source of Funds</b>			
GPR			
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
<b>III. State Revenues - Complete this only when proposal will increase or decrease state revenues (e.g., tax increase, decrease in license fee, etc.)</b>			
		Increased Rev	Decreased Rev
GPR Taxes		\$	\$
GPR Earned			
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
<b>TOTAL State Revenues</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>NET ANNUALIZED FISCAL IMPACT</b>			
		<u>State</u>	<u>Local</u>
NET CHANGE IN COSTS		\$	\$
NET CHANGE IN REVENUE		\$	\$
<b>Agency/Prepared By</b>		<b>Authorized Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

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