

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

ELB 11/24/2003

LRB Number	03-3522/1	Introduction Number	AB-680	Estimate Type	Original
Subject					
Discontinue use of electronic voting machines					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This legislation eliminates the use of certain electronic voting equipment in Wisconsin. An electronic voting system that tabulates ballots marked by the voter may continue to be used. This includes the optical scan voting systems currently used by 83% of the voters at the last general election, November 2002.

Electronic voting systems that record votes electronically without the use of a ballot that has been marked separately by the voter may no longer be used. These systems are generally called direct recording electronic (DRE) voting systems. One municipality, the city of Peshtigo, currently use this type of voting equipment.

If this legislation is enacted into law, Peshtigo will have to replace its voting system with one that conforms to the provisions of the legislation.

The federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires Wisconsin to have a voting system at each polling place that permits individuals with disabilities to cast a vote privately and independently. The state must meet this requirement by January 1, 2006. Currently no voting system approved for use in the state by the State Elections Board meets this requirement. HAVA specifies that this requirement may be met by equipping each polling place with a DRE. HAVA Section 301 (a)(3)(B).

If the state is unable to approve a voting system that meets the disability requirement of HAVA, the state may be forced to return any federal funds received under HAVA. The state has received slightly more than \$7 million as of June, 2003. It is eligible to receive an additional \$15.39 million by the end of the year.

Currently counties, cities, villages and towns purchase voting equipment. Without access to the benefit HAVA payments to the state, these government entities will have to meet the HAVA accessibility requirements from local resources.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

See above.