



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #271

### **Help America Vote Act Project Positions (Elections Board)**

[LFB 2005-07 Budget Summary: Page 150, #4]

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#### **CURRENT LAW**

On October 29, 2002, the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was signed into law. HAVA establishes a series of new mandates applicable to the states, including: (1) the creation of an official, centralized, computerized statewide voter registration list system; and (2) the implementation of requirements that all polling stations be equipped with voting systems accessible to individuals with disabilities, including non-visual accessibility for the blind and visually impaired. HAVA also provides grant funding to the states (primarily in Titles I and II of the Act).

#### **GOVERNOR**

Provide \$127,800 FED and 4.0 FED project positions annually to the Board to carry out requirements imposed on the state under HAVA. The positions would be authorized through June 30, 2007.

#### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

1. During 2002-03, Wisconsin received \$7,002,900 FED in Title I funds, which required no state match. During 2004-05, the state received \$43,063,900 FED in Title II funds, subject to a required 5% state match of \$2,265,600. The state matching funds have been provided through previous state expenditures and in-kind matches or have been reserved through a series of legislative actions. Both Title I and Title II funds may be utilized to meet the requirements of HAVA.

2. The bill provides \$127,800 FED and 4.0 FED project positions annually to the

Board to carry out requirements imposed on the state under HAVA. The new positions include: (a) 3.0 election specialists assigned to work with local officials to meet the statewide voter registration and disability access requirements, and to meet state reporting requirements under HAVA; and (b) 1.0 support specialist assigned to assist the elections specialists and to respond to inquiries received by the Elections Board's toll-free voter information telephone number required by HAVA.

3. These 4.0 HAVA-related project positions were initially authorized in the fall of 2003 and were filled in the spring of 2004. The Governor's funding and position recommendations would correct the omission of these positions from the Board's adjusted base budget. However, the bill has incorrectly budgeted \$37,200 FED annually for fringe benefits associated with the new positions on the limited-term employee salary line. These funds should be shifted to the fringe benefits line to correctly reflect the Governor's intent.

4. Since the introduction of the bill, the Elections Board has been authorized an additional HAVA-funded four-year project position through January 31, 2009. This new position, an information systems technical services specialist, would oversee: (a) the development and modifications to the statewide voter registration system in accordance with Wisconsin's business requirements for the system; and (b) the ongoing successful operation of the system, including identifying problems and proofing any system fixes, enhancements or upgrades.

5. The Elections Board's budget should similarly be modified to properly reflect the existence of this new four-year project position. The Committee could provide salary and fringe benefits funding of \$67,600 FED and 1.0 FED project position annually under the Board's federal aid appropriation for this purpose.

## ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$127,800 FED and 4.0 FED project positions annually to the Elections Board to carry out requirements imposed on the state under the federal Help America Vote Act. In addition, shift \$37,200 FED annually budgeted for LTE salaries to the fringe benefits line to properly fund the positions.

2. *[Alternative 2 may be selected in addition to Alternative 1.]* Provide an additional \$67,600 FED and 1.0 FED project position annually to the Elections Board's federal aid appropriation to formally reflect the existence of an additional project position to carry out requirements imposed on the state under the federal Help America Vote Act.

<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>FED</b>
<b>2005-07 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	\$135,200
<b>2006-07 POSITIONS</b> (Change to Bill)	1.00

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