

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-1057

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE AND  
EARLY VOTING.

## ***OFA Fiscal Note***

### ***State Impact:***

| Agency Affected        | Fund-Effect | FY 24 \$                      | FY 25 \$                  | FY 26 \$                  |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Secretary of the State | GF - Cost   | Between \$1.8 and 2.3 million | Between \$0.8-1.3 million | Between \$0.7-1.2 million |

Note: GF=General Fund

### ***Municipal Impact:***

| Municipalities     | Effect                               | FY 24 \$        | FY 25 \$          | FY 26 \$        |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| All Municipalities | STATE MANDATE <sup>1</sup><br>- Cost | About \$700,000 | About \$2,200,000 | About \$700,000 |

### ***Explanation***

The bill would result in significant labor cost for both municipalities, as well as the state. Additionally, to implement the bill as described the state would need to acquire additional technology such as CVRS software updates and to install new lines in any secondary location for early voting. It is anticipated that roughly

40<sup>2</sup> additional sites would be opened across the state generally in

<sup>1</sup> State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

<sup>2</sup> This calculation assumes that no town less than 45,000 will have a second location, half of all locations between 45,001-75,000; all locations between 75,001-100,000 will

proportion to the population of the town. The costs would also be borne by the state in addition to the cost for the public information campaign specifically for early voting and registrar's training materials. The bill places the onus of all labor costs on the municipalities individually, so the state's share of the costs mostly take effect in FY 24 as one-time expenses of roughly \$1,000,000<sup>3</sup> in year one and are reduced from year two onward. The largest differential in the range is the cost of the public information campaign for early voting. The Secretary of State's Office has indicated there would be about a \$500,000 range in costs depending upon implementation decisions.

Municipal costs would see the largest periodic fluctuation with the cost of municipal elections<sup>4</sup> being significantly less expensive than those of primary and general state elections. This leaves the weight heavily on even FYs for municipalities. The net cost per municipality will also not be evenly distributed depending heavily on the number of polling places each town chooses to utilize. The initial polling place is assumed to be a central location with existing CVRS access and staffed by existing registrar and town staff. If a municipality were to only use this location, they could expect a rough increase on odd fiscal years of \$9,500<sup>5</sup> and on even years of \$4,700 when no state general and primary elections are held.

Any municipal increasing beyond one location would require

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have two locations; all locations between 101,001-125,000 will have three locations; and any greater than 125,001 will have four. Each town may not meet this criterion, but we estimate this will roughly be the number of additional polling locations.

<sup>3</sup> Specific cost information for this section has come from data provided by the Secretary of State's Office in the form of estimates from existing vendors to provide the services rendered.

<sup>4</sup> Municipal elections as a figure were estimated based on the % of towns expected to hold schoolboard elections in CT in 2023 and extrapolated with the remainder from that point in future years. Municipal elections are presumed to have only one EV polling place per town for each town. This estimate does not include municipal primaries.

<sup>5</sup> The staffing for this location being existing employees mitigates cost for towns and leaves the differential to overtime hours varying depending on the number of EV hours and whether that day falls on a weekend. This estimate assumes an average overtime hour is valued at \$29.12 per hour.

additional staff at that location with poll workers instead of overtime, which would drastically increasing the estimated total cost for that municipality. Any town planning three additional poll locations (the maximum number in the estimate) would see an odd fiscal year price increase of around \$70,000. This is largely due to the increased labor cost of poll workers and the need to fully staff early voting locations that may be potentially added because of the bill. Costs will vary on a town-by-town basis.

The bill varies from the other two early voting proposals (SB-1064, and HB-5004) in the length of early voting 10 days in this proposal and 14 days in the others; as well as the inclusion of town referendums in early voting in the other two. The difference between costs for all three relates to the length of early voting and the elections covered on the municipal side. There is no distinction in state costs.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation, participation, and number of polling places utilized across the state.