Fiscal Note   **2023-2024 Legislative Session**

HF558 - 0 - Early Voting

		State Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
Chief Author:	**Luke Frederick**	Expenditures	X	
Commitee:	**Elections Finance & Policy**	Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Date Completed:	**1/26/2023 10:52:14 AM**	Tax Revenue		X
Agency:	Secretary of State	Information Technology	X	
		Local Fiscal Impact	X	

This table shows direct impact to state government only. Local government impact, if any, is discussed in the narrative.
Reductions shown in the parentheses.

State Cost (Savings)			**Biennium**		**Biennium**	
Dollars in Thousands		FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
General Fund		-	137	27	27	27
	Total	-	137	27	27	27
	Biennial Total			164		54

Full Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)			**Biennium**		**Biennium**	
		FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
General Fund		-	.66	.13	.13	.13
	Total	-	.66	.13	.13	.13

LBO Analyst's Comment

I have reviewed this fiscal note for reasonableness of content and consistency with the LBO's Uniform Standards and Procedures.

LBO Signature: Susan Nelson **Date:** 1/26/2023 10:52:14 AM
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State Cost (Savings) Calculation Details

This table shows direct impact to state government only. Local government impact, if any, is discussed in the narrative. Reductions are shown in parentheses.

*Transfers In/Out and Absorbed Costs are only displayed when reported.

State Cost (Savings) = 1-2 Dollars in Thousands		FY2023	Biennium FY2024	FY2025	Biennium FY2026	FY2027
General Fund		-	137	27	27	27
	Total	-	137	27	27	27
	Biennial Total			164		54
1 - Expenditures, Absorbed Costs*, Transfers Out*						
General Fund						
Expenditures		-	159	27	27	27
Absorbed Costs		-	(22)	-	-	-
	Total	-	137	27	27	27
	Biennial Total			164		54
2 - Revenues, Transfers In*						
General Fund		-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-
	Biennial Total			-		-

Bill Description

This bill provides for a system of early voting.

Section 1 provides that the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) must provide reports necessary for early voting.

Section 2 provides that the Minnesota Election Laws applies to early voting.

Section 3 provides a definition of the term early voting, defining it as voting in person before election day at the office of a city clerk or county auditor.

Section 4 adds early voting to the covered activities where certain conduct is prohibited.

Section 5 applies the same standard for municipal clerks' eligibility to administer absentee voting to early voting.

Section 6 requires the use of early voting, in place of in-person absentee voting, in township elections during the early voting period.

Section 7 provides that in person absentee voting will end at Noon the day prior to the election for those jurisdictions administering early voting.

Section 8 adds early voting to the conduct that requires the establishment of a ballot board.

Section 9 requires the ballot board to administer early voting procedures.

Section 10 requires the ballot board to record that a voter has cast a ballot pursuant to early voting procedures and provides that a voter cannot be permitted to cast another ballot in that election if they have cast voted in the early voting period.

Section 11 allows absentee ballot boards to start opening and processing absentee ballots starting the day prior to early voting period.

Section 12 incudes early voting ballots in the process for handling and storing absentee ballots.

Section 13 establishes early voting as a procedure available to any voter entitled to vote in a federal, state or county election. For city elections, this section permits a city to authorize early voting prior to candidate filing and only if the city has the technological capability and training to administer early voting.

Section 14 sets the time period of early voting as 30 days before through the third day before any applicable primary, general, or special election, and requires that voters in line at 5:00 p.m. on the third day before the election be permitted to vote.

Section 15 sets the hours of early voting as between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on each weekday during the early voting period, requires one weekday date of 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on one weekday of the jurisdiction's choosing, and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on the two Saturdays before the election.

Section 16 specifies the allowable locations for early voting and requires that early voting be available those locations designated to administer absentee voting. Each early voting location must have an accessible voting station, ballot marking device as well as a tabulator.

Section 17 requires that the county auditor or municipal clerk provide notice of the days, location, and time of early voting and must post that notice on the county or city's website 14 days prior to the start of absentee voting. The provision allows a county to publish the notice in a newspaper if the county or city does not operate a website.

Section 18 establishes procedures for casting a ballot using early voting, including a requirement that the voter sign the certification required of all voters voting on election day, and that a voter be permitted to register on-site if necessary. Ballots cast using early voting must be processed and counted by a ballot board.

Section 19 requires a county auditor to make available the supplies for early voting.

Section 20 sets the timeline for delivery of the computer programming for any election at 40 days before the election.

Section 21 changes the date for required testing of voting systems from within 14 days of the election to at least 37 days before the election.

Section 22 provides for an appropriation.

Section 23 repeals 203B.081, subdivision 3, which provided for alternative balloting procedures in the seven days before the election.

Section 24 provides that early voting will become effective upon certification by the Secretary of State that the Statewide Voter Registration System can conduct and track early voting, and that precinct voting equipment that can tabulate at least 30 different ballot styles has been certified for use in this state.

Assumptions

Substantial computer programming is required for SVRS to comply with the provisions of early voting.

The Office of Secretary of State (OSS) periodically conducts rulemaking and anticipates being able to absorb any necessary updates to the election rules required by this legislation in the OSS's periodic rulemaking.

The OSS assumes ongoing maintenance of any IT system at 20% per year.

Computer development costs are charged at $100/hour.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

Early Voting			

Computing Costs	Election Division (ED) Business Analysis	520 Hours	
	OSS Information Technology (IT)	350 Hours	
	Quality Assurance (QA)	500 Hours	
	Total Hours:	1370 Hours	
	1,370 hours @ $100/hour =		$137,000
Rulemaking Cost			$21,500
		Total:	$158,500

Long-Term Fiscal Considerations

Costs associated with maintenance of the early voting system would be at 20% per year, or $27,400.

Local Fiscal Impact

The early voting provisions of this bill will create some efficiencies at the local level because the process of early voting is more efficient than absentee voting. In-person absentee voting requires the use of an application and multiple envelopes, as well as the time needed to review the envelopes and enter the data from the application. However, there will be local costs accrued to counties and cities with the requirement that there be additional weekend voting hours prior to the election and additional evening hours.

References/Sources

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