

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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This bill provides a process for awarding grants to local units of government for the acquisition of new voting equipment. \$15 million in FY 2017 is appropriated for the purpose of awarding the grants.

The grant program would be administered by the secretary of state. A county or municipality seeking to purchase or lease new voting equipment would be eligible to apply for a grant of up to 75% of the cost of the equipment. Only purchases or leases entered on or after July 1, 2016, are eligible. The bill also states the legislature's intent to fund only 25% of the cost of future voting equipment replacement needs, after the grants provided by this bill are awarded.

If more grant applications are received than the funding will support, the secretary of state is required to develop criteria for the fair and proportional distribution of grants. Minimum criteria are provided in the bill and include, among other items, the need for equitable distribution among rural and urban jurisdictions, and whether the local jurisdiction has adopted a reasonable long-term plan to address future maintenance, repair, and replacement needs.

A legislative report on the grant awards is required by January 15, 2017, and annually thereafter until all available grant funding has been awarded.