



March 9, 2024

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Authorizes qualified voters to declare an affiliation with a political party or register as unaffiliated, and states that any voter who does not declare their party affiliate will automatically be deemed unaffiliated. Requires a county election commission to record on the voter's permanent registration record the voter's affiliation with a political party in whose primary they seek to vote. Effective January 1, 2025.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Increase State Expenditures – \$29,500/FY24-25**

**Increase Local Expenditures – \$103,100/FY24-25\***

**Other Fiscal Impact – To the extent that the required modifications to the Department of Safety's A-List system can be accomplished within available resources provided under the current vendor contract, the modifications will not result in an increase in state expenditures. Otherwise, those modifications could result in an additional one-time increase in state expenditures of up to \$58,000 in FY24-25.**

Assumptions:

- Paper applications will be updated and printed at the next regularly scheduled printing without a significant increase in state expenditures.
- According to the Secretary of State's (SOS) Division of Elections, a field indicating a voter's declared party affiliation will be added to the statewide voter registration database.
- In order to add party affiliation to the state voter registration database, it would take the entity contracted by the SOS approximately 50 hours, at a cost of \$90 per hour, for a total increase in state expenditures of \$4,500 (\$90 x 50 hours) in FY24-25.
- The updating of online voter registration forms will be performed by the Division of Election's online voter registration vendor and will result in a one-time increase in state expenditures of \$25,000 in FY24-25.
- Therefore, the total increase in state expenditures as a result of the proposed legislation will be \$29,500 (\$4,500 + \$25,000) in FY24-25.

- The Department of Safety would require modifications to its A-List system to allow for changes to the voter registration process in order to comply with the proposed legislation.
- To the extent that these A-List modifications can be accomplished within available resources provided under the current vendor contract, the modifications will not result in an increase in state expenditures; otherwise, those modifications could result in an additional one-time increase in state expenditures of up to \$58,000 in FY24-25.
- County election commissions will be required to update their voter registration records. While the majority of counties can accomplish this within existing resources, three counties will incur a mandatory one-time increase in local expenditures associated with this update: Knox County will have a one-time increase in expenditures of \$1,500 in FY24-25, Davidson County will have a one-time increase in expenditures of \$15,575 in FY24-25, and Shelby County will have a one-time increase in expenditures of \$86,000 in FY24-25.
- Therefore, the total mandatory increase in local expenditures will be \$103,075 (\$1,500 + \$15,575 + \$86,000) in FY24-25.

*\*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

## **CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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