

## Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB1439

**House of Origin**     Introduced     Substitute     Engrossed  
**Second House**     In Committee     Substitute     Enrolled

**2. Patron:**    Wiley

**3. Committee:** Privileges and Elections

**4. Title:**    Voter registration by political party affiliation; partially closed primary elections.

**5. Summary:** Adds party affiliation, beginning January 1, 2025, to the information that an applicant is asked to provide when registering to vote. The applicant may indicate that he is an independent. The bill specifies that voters registered prior to January 1, 2025, will be designated as independent unless they provide a political party affiliation to the general registrar. Voters may change their political party affiliation or independent status by written notice at any time before the registration records are closed prior to an election. The bill also provides that voters who are on the permanent absentee voter list will receive primary ballots for the political party with which they are registered as affiliated. Finally, the bill requires the state party chairman of each political party to file written notice with the State Board of Elections by January 31 of each year stating the rules adopted by the duly constituted authorities of the state political party for participation in the party's primaries to be held from April 1 of that year through March 31 of the following year.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 77.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary; see below.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** The proposed legislation would require the Department of Elections (ELECT) to modify multiple systems and programs to include various new registration flags, from registration through report generation. Costs that will be incurred include updating instructions and guidance documents to include translation, changes to the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) due to the implementation date, Citizen Portal, poll book software and, if needed, changes to web materials, printing and distribution of forms, additional support for staff to research Code sections, and updates to forms impacted by the legislation. ELECT and General Registrars would also need to conduct an education campaign to adequately inform voters of the change.

The new Statewide Voter Registration System is currently in development with a 2025 calendar year implementation. Any changes to this system may require additional time and resources as there is limited capacity to absorb the additional workload with current staffing levels. ELECT's preliminary estimate of the one-time cost to make the required changes is \$117,600. Information technology changes are estimated to be \$67,600 based on 520 hours at

\$130.00 per hour provided by contractors for system changes. In addition to the technology changes, it is estimated that an additional \$50,000 will be required for form updates, education outreach, and translation services.

The Department of Motor Vehicles expects they could implement the provisions of this bill utilizing existing staff and resources.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Virginia Department of Elections, State Board of Elections, and localities (General Registrars and Electoral Boards).

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No.

**11. Other Comments:** This bill is the same as HB56.

January 30, 2024