



PO Box 863  
Augusta, ME 04332-0863  
www.lwvme.org  
(207) 622-0256



121 Middle Street, Suite 301  
Portland, ME 04101  
www.aclumaine.org  
(207) 774-5444

TO: The Honorable John Atwood, Chair  
Members of the Commission to Study the Conduct of Elections in Maine

FROM: Barbara McDade, President, League of Women Voters of Maine  
Shenna Bellows, Executive Director, ACLU of Maine

SUBJECT: Cost of Voter ID and Sources of Funds

DATE: September 5, 2012

---

At the public hearing on August 30, we heard some powerful testimony by an election worker from Kennebunk about the need for new optical scanning equipment to replace aging voting machines. We agree. Keeping our voting equipment up-to-date and well-functioning is vitally important to the integrity of the entire process.

Our understanding is that, as of 2010, Maine had something like \$4.75 million in unspent HAVA funds – money granted to the states by the federal government under the 2002 Help America Vote Act. This is money that could be used for the purchase of new voting equipment for several Maine municipalities.

Recently, however, we understand that HAVA money was proposed to cover the cost of implementation of voter ID. When LD 199 was proposed in the first session of the 125<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the bill had no fiscal note because the costs of the program were to be paid from HAVA funds.

Implementation of voter ID laws in other states has cost millions of dollars. In addition to the cost of offering free documents such as driver's licenses and birth certificates, other states have had to launch massive and continuing voter education campaigns. This is in addition to the added costs of administering the requirements at the polls. Some of the costs that may need to be addressed include:

- Poll worker training
- Public education campaigns
- Possible lost revenue
- Defending against possible lawsuits
- Additional absentee ballots and processing

- 
- Possible free photo ID and birth certificates
  - Costs to local governments that may need to extend hours of operation

A recent bi-partisan commission of County Auditors from Iowa went on a fact finding mission to Indiana to learn the cost of implementing photo ID legislation. Indiana was the first state to implement such legislation in 2007. The Iowa State Association of County Auditors (ISACA) report found that the cost of implementing the photo ID law in Indiana exceeds \$10 million over four years, and that is simply the cost of providing free photo identification. These figures do not include the continuing cost to educate voters (an additional \$600,000 for 2010 alone) or re-train poll workers and elections officials. (See charts attached.)

We ask the Commission to weigh the benefit of spending our HAVA money on voter ID to solve a problem that doesn't exist against the benefit to election process of modernizing our voting equipment to solve a real, practical problem that could affect thousands of voters and dozens of election officials.

---

Examples of Cost Fiscal Impacts of Implementing Voter Photo ID

---

**Indiana – Free photo IDs**

For certain persons, Indiana provides free photo IDs from the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) for voting purposes. Each free ID is clearly labeled, “For Voting Purposes,” and provision of the free IDs has also been cited in court challenges as a method to prevent an undue burden on persons otherwise unable to pay for the ID, and to counter allegations of a poll tax. The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles has calculated its cost at \$13 for each ID and has provided the following documentation of the costs incurred by the Bureau for providing the free IDs for voting purposes:

| <b>Year</b>    | <b># ID's</b>  | <b>Cost</b>          |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>2007</b>    | <b>175,300</b> | <b>\$ 2,278,900</b>  |
| <b>2008</b>    | <b>219,203</b> | <b>\$ 2,849,639</b>  |
| <b>2009</b>    | <b>208,250</b> | <b>\$ 2,707,250</b>  |
| <b>2010</b>    | <b>168,264</b> | <b>\$ 2,187,432</b>  |
| <b>To date</b> | <b>771,017</b> | <b>\$ 10,023,221</b> |

Comparing Iowa’s 2.1 million registered voters to Indiana’s 4.3 million, and using the current Iowa charge of \$5.00 for a non-operator ID, an estimate of the annual cost of free photo IDs in Iowa would be:

84,132 number of free non-operator IDs

\$5.00 current charge for non-operator ID in Iowa

\$420,660 cost per year

If Iowa would offer free birth certificates in addition to free photo IDs, an estimate would be:

84,132 number of free birth certificates

\$15.00 current charge for certified birth certificate in Iowa

\$1,261,980 cost per year

Indiana includes administrative costs in the \$13 per ID amount; this paper does not attempt to estimate such administrative costs for Iowa, and actual amounts currently charged are used in the above estimates.

Iowa State Association of County Auditors Voter ID Report 020211 final.doc pp. 6-7



## HOW MUCH WOULD A VOTER ID LAW COST NORTH CAROLINA?

Every place is different, but the experiences of other states offer clues to the likely cost of a voter ID bill for North Carolina taxpayers. The following projections come from fiscal notes, or cost estimates, prepared by state officials. A Facing South/Institute for Southern Studies analysis of fiscal notes for voter ID laws nationally found that most neglected to report key expenses or stated these costs could be "absorbed" by existing agencies -- an unlikely scenario today, with deep budget cuts at all level of government.

| STATE EXPENSE                       | WHY IT'S NEEDED   | 3-YEAR ESTIMATES OTHER STATES  | 3-YEAR ESTIMATE NORTH CAROLINA                        |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| EDUCATING VOTERS                    | TV ads, mailings, other outreach to inform current and new voters; to avoid confusion and people being turned away at the polls   | High End - <b>Missouri: \$16.9 million</b> (\$1.37/voter/year)<br>Low End - <b>Texas: \$6 million</b> (15 cents/voter/year)  | <b>\$13 - 15.8 million</b><br>(80 cents/voter/year)   |
| ID CARDS                            | ID materials/equipment; increased demand at DMV ID stations; cost of issuing ID cards to avoid law becoming "poll tax" on those without ID  | High End - <b>Missouri: \$3.4 million</b> (28 cents/voter/year)<br>Mid-Level - <b>Wisconsin: \$2.3 million</b> (22 cents/voter/year)<br>Low End - <b>South Carolina: \$675,000*</b> (3 cents/voter/year)   | <b>\$2.5 - \$4.7 million</b><br>(20 cents/voter/year) |
| ADMINISTRATIVE/IMPLEMENTATION COSTS | Hiring/training more precinct judges and poll staff to handle IDs and provisional ballots; printing provisional ballots; updating forms/procedures and training staff, other expenses | <b>POLL STAFF: Montgomery County, Maryland: \$285,000</b> (16 cents/voter/year); <b>Minnesota: \$1.4 million</b> (15 cents/voter/year) <b>plus EXTRA BALLOTS: South Carolina: \$480,000</b> (2 cents/voter/year) <b>plus SYSTEMS/TRAINING: Wisconsin: \$138,000</b> (4 cents/voter) <b>plus other expenses</b> | <b>\$3.5 - \$5.5 million</b><br>(25 cents/voter/year) |
| <b>TOTAL COST</b>                   |   |  | <b>\$18.5 - \$25.2 million for three years</b>        |

\* Estimate for cameras and ID equipment ONLY; South Carolina's estimates did not include other costs associated with IDs

Source: Fiscal notes for Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin legislatures  
 Chart: Institute for Southern Studies, February 2011 ([www.southernstudies.org](http://www.southernstudies.org))

---

**FISCAL ESTIMATE FOR MISSOURI HJR 48**

| <u>Item</u>  | <u>Cost</u>           |
|--|-----------------------|
| Quarter page ads through the MO Press Association run twice before each federal election.  | \$1,200.00            |
| Production of radio and TV public service announcements  | \$1,240.00            |
| The advance notice provided by the SOS must include at a minimum the "use of advertisements and public service announcements in print, broadcast television, radio, and cable television media | \$1,500,000.00        |
| The bill requires that the Secretary of State print provisional ballots.   | \$22,000.00           |
| Costs for 116 Local Election Authorities   | \$3,600,000.00        |
| The cost of the additional poll workers and the training required to successfully implement the act for a single election is as follows:   | \$1,282,050.00        |
| The Secretary of State's office will have to register voter registration solicitors - Staff needs  | \$15,000.00           |
| Investigating complaints   | \$8,500.00            |
| <b>COST TO MISSOURI TAXPAYERS</b>  | <b>\$6,429,990.00</b> |

*From Fiscal Note: 4947S-25S*