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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Espinoza/Brown ORIGINAL DATE 2/8/16
LAST UPDATED _____ HB 309

SHORT TITLE Questions for Sec. of State On Ballots SB _____

ANALYST Jorgensen

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY16	FY17	FY18	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		NFI	NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Secretary of State (SOS)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 309 prohibits any nonbinding questions from being included on election ballots and requires ballot questions be sent to the SOS fifty-six days prior to the election.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Because advisory questions have already been allowed on the ballot, and any related costs incurred, enactment of HB 309 may create cost savings related to ballot purchasing and rental of election-equipment.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The SOS writes:

Cost savings could be realized by restricting ballot questions since the longer the ballot the higher the printing costs. For example, ballot printing system lease cost estimates for Bernalillo county for the 2016 primary election for a 14" single sided ballot are approximately 240 units at a cost of \$551,760 vs. a 19" double sided ballot which would require 390 units at a cost of \$896,610 to process the same number of voters in the same amount of time.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

In 2014, Bernalillo and Santa Fe counties included advisory questions on their ballots. The questions were rejected by the SOS because they were nonbinding. In September, the Supreme Court ruled that the SOS could not unilaterally remove questions from the county side of the ballot. HB 309 provides a specific prohibition from including these nonbinding questions on the ballot.

CJ/al/jo