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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 222

SHORT TITLE: Voter Identification Requirements

SPONSOR: Block/Mason/Lord

LAST ORIGINAL
UPDATE: _____ **DATE:** 2/16/2026 **ANALYST:** Esquibel

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
SOS		\$81.0-\$161.0	\$162.0-\$322.0	\$243.0-\$483.0	Recurring	General Fund
SOS		\$620.0			Nonrecurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis

Secretary of State's Office

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 222

House Bill 222 (HB222) would require physical voter identification be provided at the time a voter votes in-person or by mailed ballot. The provisions further remove existing accepted forms of identification required for voting except for an identification documentation issued by the state's Motor Vehicle Division (MVD). The section requires that voters provide a copy of the identification document and their social security number when voting by mail.

HB222 also amends the state's voter registration process by requiring voters to provide a copy of their current driver's license or identification card issued by MVD at the time of registration. In addition, voters requesting a mailed ballot for elections would be required to provide a current driver's license or identification card issued by MVD, and mailed ballot envelopes would be required to have the full social security number instead of just the last four digits.

Voter's whose required identification is challenged for not conforming are to be offered a provisional ballot. Voters would be able to satisfy the reason for a rejected provisional ballot by providing the required identification, but further amendments remove the ability for voters to vote on a provisional ballot if the voter (1) has not previously voted in a general election in New Mexico or has been purged from the voter list; (2) registered to vote by mail; and (3) did not submit the physical form of the required voter identification with the certificate of registration form.

HB222 repeals 1-12-4.1 NMSA 1978 which provides, “If on election day the amount of time voters must spend in line before being able to vote in the precinct exceeds 45 minutes, the presiding judge of the precinct shall suspend all physical forms of voter identification requirements other than those mandated by federal law; provided, however, that at the request of two or more precinct board members of different political parties, a voter shall still present the required physical form of identification, and in the case of a voter who does not provide the required name, birth year and unique identifier, the voter shall still be required to present the required physical form of identification.”

The effective date of this bill is July 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Secretary of State’s Office reports Section 1 requires the state provide a free copy of the voter’s required voter identification document. SOS estimates this cost at up to \$322 thousand a year.

The requirements altering the mailed ballot application process would also require some changes to existing IT systems to capture voters’ social security numbers. In addition, the requirement to provide a photo id when applying online for an absentee ballot would necessitate modifications to the systems used to capture, process, and store these applications. The modifications will affect at least three different vendors and are estimated at \$120 thousand.

The implementation of HB222 will require a substantial voter education effort. This is estimated to cost \$500 thousand, to include dedicated staffing, advertising and other resources.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Secretary of State’s Office reports, except for current identification issued by MVD, HB222 removes all currently accepted forms of required identification necessary to vote, including IDs issued by an Indian nation, tribe, or pueblo. These changes would suppress the participation of many eligible groups in our state’s electoral process, including senior citizen voters, who often do not have valid physical identification issued from MVD.

The provisions in Sections 10-11 may be subject to challenge under the National Voter Registration Act, which states “discriminatory and unfair registration laws and procedures can have a direct and damaging effect on voter participation in elections for Federal office and disproportionately harm voter participation by various groups, including racial minorities.” The provisions also likely violate federal law that requires provisional voting be provided as option to voters for whom an “election official asserts that the individual is not eligible to vote.”

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

SOS reports, under the provisions of the bill, SOS would have additional administrative duties associated with education and compliance. SOS operating budget would need full funding to keep up with the volume of work associated with all of the statutory duties supported by the office.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

SOS notes in Section 9 the bill is not clear if a challenge would need to be sustained by an election board, as outlined in 1-12-22 NMSA 1978, for the voter to be provided a provisional ballot.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

SOS states, “The passage of HB222 would likely dramatically reduce turnout among qualified electors in New Mexico’s elections.”

RAE/hg