

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/28/11

SPONSOR Little LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 352

SHORT TITLE Shorten Early Voting Period SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Aledo

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY11	FY12		
	NFI*		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Secretary of State (SOS)

County Clerks Affiliate (CCA)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 352 amends the early voting section of the Election Code. This legislation shortens the early voting period by a week. It states that the period of early voting shall commence on the second Saturday prior to an election, rather than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday prior to the election.

The effective date of this legislation would be on July 1, 2011.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

According to the Secretary of State's Office, the costs of early voting sites are paid by individual counties. This legislation would decrease the costs associated with maintaining and operating early voting sites and hiring poll workers, but may increase absentee and Election Day voting costs to some extent. This legislation may decrease the amount of manpower and support provided by the Secretary of State's office to county clerks but does not appear to have a significant impact on the Secretary of State's office.

The County Clerks Affiliate noted that the early voting period is much too long and the turnout too low to justify the cost. In a 2010, the per vote cost for early voting in Bernalillo County ran from \$60-80 per early site and in Santa Fe County, the cost was over \$25 per vote at early sites.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

In recent years, many voters have begun to rely upon the convenience of early voting. The SOS notes that instituting a shortened time period, might reduce the percentage of individuals voting early. Approximately 4.5% of early voters vote in the first week; 10.5% in the second week; 32% in the third week and 53% in the final week.

**AMENDMENTS**

The County Clerks Affiliate suggested eliminating early voting in primary elections.

MCA/svb