

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-820

AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE VOTING RIGHTS ACT.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Secretary of the State	GF - Cost	Up to 300,000	Up to 150,000
UConn	Various - Cost	Up to 600,000	Up to 700,000
Attorney General	GF - Cost	314,385	273,638
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	192,000	196,000

Note: GF=General Fund; Various=Various

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Various Municipalities	Potential Cost	Significant	Significant

Explanation

This bill generally codifies into state law several aspects of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 which bans discrimination in voting and elections and established a mechanism for certain jurisdictions with a history of discrimination against racial and language minorities to seek preapproval before changing their election laws. This will result in significant costs to the state and municipalities.

The bill requires the University of Connecticut to establish and maintain a database containing a range of elections and demographic

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.3% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

data, results in an estimated cost of up to \$600,000 in FY 22 and up to \$700,000 in FY 23 and annually thereafter. The costs are anticipated to be: (1) one-time startup computer and software costs of approximately \$250,000 in FY 22, and (2) personnel costs associated with the staff to provide the analysis and services required in the bill, estimated to be up to \$350,000 for half-year costs in FY 22 and up to \$700,000 for annual costs beginning in FY 23. The staff are anticipated to be a director as required in the bill, with an estimated annual salary of \$125,000, as well as up to three analyst-level staff given the scope of responsibilities, each with an average annual salary of \$75,000.²

This bill requires the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to make determinations of certain municipal plans, intended to protect specified classes of electors. This determination process may include various municipalities simultaneously in the years following a redistricting or court litigation. This is estimated to result in costs to OAG of \$314,385 in FY 22 and \$273,638 in FY 22 to hire to additional Assistant Attorneys General (AAG) and an additional paralegal to perform the analysis and casework preparation required in advance of making determinations required under the bill's requirements. There would also be associated costs of \$129,841 in FY 22 and \$133,663 in FY 23 for fringe benefits, and one-time costs of approximately \$50,000 annually for proprietary redistricting software to make the determination.

It is estimated each AAG would spend two to three months each analyzing each municipality's plan before making an approval decision. Under the bill, OAG is given 60 days to make a determination.

The Secretary of the State and certain municipalities may incur significant costs to meet the bill's requirements. Certain municipal

² The fringe benefit costs for employees funded out of other appropriated funds are budgeted within the fringe benefit account of those funds, as opposed to the fringe benefit accounts within the Office of the State Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes for other appropriated fund employees is 95.57% of payroll in FY 22 and FY 23.

plans, intended to protect specified classes of electors, could result in significant costs. The Secretary of the State costs are estimated at up to \$300,000 to meet the bill's requirements and includes the hiring of two positions (estimated combined cost of \$150,000) and a one-time consultant cost.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.