

LFC Requester:

Hilla, Emily

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2025 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov

(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Date Prepared: 2/24/2025

Check all that apply:

Bill Number: HB 526

Original Correction

Amendment Substitute

Sponsor: Cristina Parajon
Carrie Hamblen
Angel M. Charley

Agency Name

and Code

Secretary of State - 370

Number:

Short Title: VOTING AGE FOR LOCAL &
MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Person Writing Analysis: Lindsey Bachman

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		

(Parenthesis () indicate expenditure decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26	FY27		

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected

Total			\$120			
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(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis:

HB 526 provides for the registration of qualified residents who are sixteen or seventeen years of age to vote in regular local elections, municipal elections and special local elections.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bills requirements will necessitate modifications to statewide systems. The modifications will affect at least three different vendors and are estimated at \$120,000.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HB 526 would expand on the Election Code's existing provisions related to 16- and 17-year-olds to include the eligibility to vote in local elections.

Pursuant to 1-1-5.10 NMSA 1978, a "qualified resident" means an individual who is under the age of eighteen and, except for the age requirement, otherwise satisfies the state's voter eligibility requirements as a qualified elector or a federal qualified elector." Currently, qualified residents in New Mexico can pre-register to vote, with those registrations becoming officially active and those registrants eligible to vote when they turn eighteen on or before the day of a statewide or special election. 16- and 17-year-olds are also eligible to serve as election board members, and for the purposes of a political primary election, 17-year-olds may also currently vote if they will turn eighteen on or before the general election immediately succeeding that primary election.

Lowering the voting age for local elections could lead to long-term increases in voter turnout in New Mexico overall. A 2003 study¹ from Yale University found that "voting in one election substantially increases the likelihood of voting in the future."

Further research² from Rutgers University in 2010 concluded, "Analyses of national survey data demonstrate that by 16 years of age—but not before— American adolescents' manifest levels of development in each quality of citizenship that are approximately the same as those apparent in young American adults who are allowed to vote."

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

1. Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green & Ron Shachar (2003) "Voting May be Habit Forming: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment." American Journal of Political Science 47(3): 540-550. DOI: 10.1111/1540-5907.00038

2. Hart, D., & Atkins, R. (2011). American Sixteen- and Seventeen-Year-Olds Are Ready to Vote. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 633(1), 201-222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716210382395>

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

SB 218 would require all municipal officer elections to occur with the Regular Local Election. Should SB 218 pass, the municipal officer election referred to in HB 526 would no longer exist.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTERNATIVES

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Status quo.

AMENDMENTS