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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/20/13

SPONSOR Cote LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 524

SHORT TITLE Alternative Voting Locations in Certain Areas SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Cerny

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY13	FY14	FY15	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>		Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Recurring	Election Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 92

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From  
Secretary of State (SOS)

No Response  
Association of County Clerks

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 524 will amend Section 1-6-5.6 of the Election Code such that county clerks will establish alternate voting locations for early voting for a minimum of 5 days, including at least one Saturday, in population centers:

- where more than 1500 voters reside within a 10-mile radius, in one or more precincts;
- located more than 50 road miles from the nearest alternate voting location in the county; and
- are not served by a mobile alternate voting location.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SOS analysis states the SOS would be required to supply voting systems for any such location.

The affected county clerks would be required to supply poll workers and provide an early voting location. Depending on how many areas are affected, this could have quite a substantial fiscal

impact on both counties and the SOS, but it is difficult to know until the calculations anticipated in the bill are performed by the clerks.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

1-6-5-7(d) of the Election Code provides for requirements for alternate voting locations, unless waived by the SOS. These include: sufficient ballots for voters from every precinct; at least one optical scan tabulator; a least one voting system to assist disabled voters; a broadband internet connection; sufficient space for 5 voters with at least one being wheelchair-accessible; a secure area for storage pre-printed ballots, and compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

SOS analysis states that since this bill is intended to address rural areas, clerks may have difficulty providing the broadband internet connection.

SOS also states: “The requirement of a 10 mile radius may be difficult for clerks to make a determination as to whether an area fits within this requirement. It appears from the language of the bill that the requirement is intended to cover precincts in more than one county that may fall into the same population center. It may be helpful to further define the term ‘population center.’”

### **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

Section 1-6-5.6, which HB 524 amends, is a general introduction in the Election Code to Early Voting. It may be more appropriate to amend the following section 1-6-5.7, which addresses alternate voting locations criteria and requirements, for the changes outlined in this bill.

### **AMENDMENTS**

Section D (2) stipulates that the one of the criteria for determining whether an alternate voting location is required includes population centers “more than fifty road miles from the nearest alternate voting location in the county, including the office of the county clerk.” Since calculating road mileage could be a labor-intensive process for the county clerks, it is recommended that the language be changed to “more than a fifty mile radius from the nearest voting location.”

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

SOS analysis states: “The genesis of the legislation is the reported long lines and delays in the General Election in the community of Chaparral. For unknown reasons, possibly because a second precinct was created very late in the county commission redistricting process, the precinct boards were not organized and staffed in the normal manner. In the 2012 General Election, both precincts 1 and 41 were placed at the same polling place and were supervised by only one precinct board. By all accounts, this led to great confusion in sorting out the voters and procuring the proper ballot for each voter. In future elections, all that needs to happen is that Precinct 1 and Precinct 41 should be separated into two distinct polling places with two separate precinct boards. These combined precincts voted only 294 and 255 voters respectively on Election Day, a very small number by statewide standards. The creation of a separate voting site would waste precious election funds. The solution is simply using two separate polling places with two separate precinct boards.”