



**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE**  
**Fiscal Note**

Fiscal Note On: **HB 9** HLS 241ES 10  
 Bill Text Version: **ORIGINAL**  
 Opp. Chamb. Action:  
 Proposed Amd.:  
 Sub. Bill For.:

<b>Date:</b> January 15, 2024 10:20 PM	<b>Author:</b> LANDRY, MANDIE
<b>Dept./Agy.:</b> Department of State	
<b>Subject:</b> Vote by Mail	<b>Analyst:</b> Kimberly Fruge

ELECTIONS/ABSENTEE VOTE OR INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 1  
 Allows all registered voters to utilize voting by mail (Item #10)

Present law requires a voter to provide reasons to vote absentee such as being out of the state or parish on election day (must provide dates of absence) or hospitalization. Proposed law removes absentee requirements for absentee voting and allows all registered voters to vote by mail. Proposed law removes the word "absentee" from present law on voting by mail and early voting. Under present law, the mailed ballot shall contain a ballot envelope and a return envelope. Proposed law provides that the return envelopes have prepaid postage.

EXPENDITURES	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>	<u>5 -YEAR TOTAL</u>
State Gen. Fd.	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Annual Total</b>						
REVENUES	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>2027-28</u>	<u>2028-29</u>	<u>5 -YEAR TOTAL</u>
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
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Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION**

Proposed law will result in a significant increase of SGF expenditures to the Department of State to implement voting by mail. Costs includes a one-time cost for IT program development changes, printing of new forms, envelopes, posters and manuals, and recurring costs for additional mail ballots, return postage, and additional election night commissioners to assist with processing the increased number of mail ballots.

The LFO estimates a one-time cost of approximately \$1 M based on estimates provided by the department during the 2020 Regular Session for similar proposed legislation. This includes IT programming costs to update the Election Registration and Information Network (ERIN) System. Over 50 forms, envelopes, posters, and manuals would require revision to update to a voting by mail system and removal of the word absentee. In addition, the department would likely need to purchase high speed scanners to count the anticipated increase in mail ballots.

The average number of mail ballots was previously estimated to be approximately 175,000. Based upon states that have passed similar laws, it is anticipated that mail ballots will increase by 50%, an estimated increase of 87,500. Assuming each ballot costs \$1.30 in supplies and \$1 in postage, the estimated increase is \$201,250. Proposed law also requires the Department of State to provide return postage, estimated to be approximately \$1.20, totaling \$315,000 (175,000 ballots + 87,500 ballots = 265,000 ballots x \$1.20 return postage). Assuming four elections annually, the increase in total costs for printing and mailing ballots with return postage would be approximately \$1.5 M annually.

Additional election night commissioners may also be required to help process the increased number of mail ballots. The number of additional commissioners is indeterminable at this time.

The department is working to get more concrete estimates of these additional costs. Once the LFO has received feedback from the department, this fiscal note will be updated accordingly.

**REVENUE EXPLANATION**

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

Senate  
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}  
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House  
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}  
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

*Alan M. Boxberger*  
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 Legislative Fiscal Officer