

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB742

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. **Patron:** O'Quinn

3. **Committee:** Privileges and Elections

4. **Title:** State Board of Elections; membership; appointment of Commissioner of Elections.

5. **Summary:** Exempts the Department of Elections from provisions allowing the Governor to appoint a chief deputy and a confidential assistant for policy or administration. The bill expands the membership of the State Board of Elections (the State Board) from five members to seven members. The bill also gives the State Board the authority and duty to appoint the Commissioner of Elections of the Department of Elections and requires an affirmative vote of five of the State Board's seven members for the appointment and removal of the Commissioner of Elections. In the event that a vacancy occurs in the office of the Commissioner of Elections, the bill provides that the Director of Operations of the Department of Elections will serve as the head of the agency until such vacancy is filled by the State Board. The bill has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2025.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes; Item 77.

7. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary; see below.

8. **Fiscal Implications:** This bill would increase membership of the State Board of Elections (the Board) from five to seven members. The Department of Elections estimates an annual cost of \$4,806 per additional Board member.

This estimate is based on the following annual cost for a new member at current rates: nine days of lodging and per diems at a cost of \$2,205 (lodging \$1,341, per diem \$864), \$135 for overnight parking, and \$2,466 for travel for the nine meetings currently held each year. The average assumed travel distance is 418 miles and was calculated based on the average distance to the State Board of Elections' office from the following three locations: the valley region's Winchester City, Accomack County in the eastern region, and Bristol City in the southwestern region of the Commonwealth. Actual travel costs depend on the distance traveled by an individual member with the assumption that two of the board members will require overnight accommodations. With seven board members it is anticipated that each of the seven election regions would have a board member. The total estimated cost for fiscal year 2025 is \$4,806 for two additional members with ongoing annual costs of \$9,612 thereafter.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Virginia Department of Elections and State Board of Elections.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.

January 22, 2024