

FISCAL NOTE

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Bill/Resolution No.: HB 1157

Amendment to \_\_\_\_\_

Requested by Legislative Council

Date of Request: 1-3-97

1. Please estimate the fiscal impact (in dollar amounts) of the above measure for state general and special fund, counties, and cities.

Narrative: See attached narrative

2. State fiscal effect in dollar amounts:

| 1995-97<br>Biennium |                 | 1997-99<br>Biennium |                 | 1999-2001<br>Biennium |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| General<br>Fund     | Special<br>Fund | General<br>Fund     | Special<br>Fund | General<br>Fund       | Special<br>Fund |

Revenues: **The projected savings each time a statewide special election is held is estimated at approximately \$200,000 using voting by mail versus the traditional method of voting.**

Expenditures:

3. What, if any, is the effect of this measure on the appropriation of your agency or department:

- a. For the rest of the 1995-97 biennium: **The savings are not reflected in the appropriation for this agency because the appropriation to pay for special statewide elections is not a part of this agency's budget.**
- b. For the 1997-99 biennium:
- c. For the 1999-2001 biennium:


4. County and City Fiscal effect in dollar amounts:

| 1995-97<br>Biennium |        |                  | 1997-99<br>Biennium |        |                  | 1999-2001<br>Biennium |        |                  |
|---------------------|--------|------------------|---------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------|--------|------------------|
| Counties            | Cities | School Districts | Counties            | Cities | School Districts | Counties              | Cities | School Districts |

**Statistical basis not available for determining the savings to the counties**

If additional space is needed, attach a supplemental sheet.

Date Prepared: Jan, 6, 1997

Signed   
 Typed Name Alvin A. Jaeger  
 Department: Secretary of State  
 Phone Number: 328-2900



## SECRETARY OF STATE

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
600 EAST BOULEVARD AVENUE  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0500

January 6, 1996

### Narrative to Fiscal Note for HB 1157

The provisions of this bill has two separate fiscal impacts. One for the counties and one for the state.

The first fiscal impact would allow the counties, at their option, to use the provisions of Chapter 16.1-11.1 (voting by mail) for both the primary and general elections. Presently, the counties only have the option of using voting by mail for primary elections.

During the 1996 June primary, four counties (Adams, Billings, Sheridan, and Towner) used voting by mail. Each of these counties reported positive results and favorable comments from their voters. However, they also expressed a desire of having the option of using voting by mail for both the primary and general election. They say it's too confusing for the voters to switch back and forth. Also, they can't measure true savings because of having to switch back and forth between voting by mail and the traditional method of voting. While it's believed money would be saved, there is no basis by which to estimate a cost savings by allowing counties the option of using voting by mail for both elections.

Counties would also be allowed to use voting by mail for special county elections. Because special county elections are usually confined to one or a limited number of issues, it's anticipated that voting by mail would also offer counties a cost savings option for special county elections.

The second fiscal impact is much easier to project. Since the 1993 Legislative Assembly, the state is required to reimburse the counties for the cost of special statewide elections. The funds would be made available by the next legislative assembly after the special election is held. Usually, a special statewide election is also confined to one or a limited number of issues.

In 1992, the special election to fill the vacancy created by the death of Senator Burdick cost the counties approximately \$400,000. By using voting by mail, the state was able to conduct the 1996 Presidential Preference Contest for \$197,000. The 1995 Legislative Assembly had appropriated \$275,000 and gave the Secretary of State the option of using voting by mail. The savings of 28% was due to the utilization of the voting by mail option.

Therefore, by having voting by mail as an option available for a special statewide election, it is believed the state could save approximately \$200,000 using voting by mail versus the traditional method of conducting a statewide special election.