



**Colorado  
Legislative  
Council  
Staff**

**SB17-071**

**FINAL  
FISCAL NOTE**

**FISCAL IMPACT:**  State  Local  Statutory Public Entity  Conditional  No Fiscal Impact

**Drafting Number:** LLS 17-0697  
**Prime Sponsor(s):** Sen. Tate

**Date:** August 29, 2017  
**Bill Status:** Deemed Lost  
**Fiscal Analyst:** Chris Creighton (303-866-5834)

**BILL TOPIC:** VOTER SERVICE & POLLING CENTER EARLY VOTING GENERAL ELECTION

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	<b>\$26,368</b>	
Cash Funds	26,368	
FTE Position Change		
<b>Appropriation Required:</b> \$26,368 Department of State (FY 2017-18).		
<b>Future Year Impacts:</b> Ongoing workload increase.		

**Note:** This bill was not enacted into law; therefore, the impacts identified in this analysis do not take effect.

**Summary of Legislation**

This bill changes the number and hours of voter service and polling centers (vote centers) that must be open in each county during the early voting period, the Saturday and the Monday before the general election, and on election day as follows:

For counties with over 300,000 active voters:

- during the first seven days of early voting at least one vote center is required per every 75,000 active voters, which must be open at least 8 hours;
- during the next six days of early voting at least one vote center is required for every 50,000 active voters, which must be open at least until 6:00 pm;
- on the Saturday before the election at least one vote center is required for every 50,000 active voters, which must be open at least from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm; and
- on the Monday before the election at least one vote center is required for every 50,000 active voters, which must be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

For counties with over 25,000, but fewer than 300,000 active voters:

- during the first seven days of early voting at least one vote center is required for every 75,000 active voters, which must be open at least 8 hours;

- during the next six days of early voting at least one vote center is required for every 50,000 active voters, which must be open at least until 6:00 pm;
- on the Saturday before the election at least one voter center is required for every 30,000 active voters, which must be open at least from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm;
- on the Monday before the election at least one vote center is required for every 30,000 active voters, which must be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm; and
- on election day at least one vote center is required for every 15,000 active voters with no fewer than three, which must be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

For counties with over 10,000, but fewer than 25,000 active voters:

- during the early voting period and on the Monday before the election at least one vote center is required, which must be open during business hours;
- on the Saturday before the election at least one vote center is required, which must be open at least from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; and
- on election day at least two vote centers are required, which must be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

For counties with fewer than 10,000 active voters:

- during early voting and on the Monday before the election at least one vote center is required, which must be open during business hours;
- on the first Saturday before the election at least one vote center is required, which must be open at least from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm;
- on election day at least one voter center is required, which must be open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

**Secure drop-off locations.** Each county with at least 5,000 active voters must provide at least one twenty-four hour secure drop-off location. Counties with at least 30,000 active voters must ensure that drop-off locations are secure twenty-four hour locations.

**Vote center locations.** A vote center must be located on each college campus with 15,000 full time students. Designated election officials are encouraged to consult with local school boards and school administration to discuss whether any public schools can be used for vote centers and the adoption of a school calendar that allows the use of public schools as vote centers during general election years. The Secretary of State is required to submit a report by March 1 of every odd-numbered year to the General Assembly describing the locations used for vote centers and the reason the use of any public building was denied.

**Statewide voter registration system testing.** Prior to each general election, the Secretary of State must conduct load testing on the statewide voter registration system and provide the test results to the General Assembly and any elections practices advisory boards.

**Wait time measurement and reporting.** On election day each county clerk or the Secretary of State is required to measure at least hourly the wait times at every vote center. The Secretary of State is required to post the results of these measurements at least hourly.

## **Background**

Under current law, vote centers must at a minimum be open in all counties during the 15 days prior to election day, except on Sundays. Counties with over 25,000 active voters must have one vote center for every 30,000 active voters during the early voting period and one vote center for every 15,000 active voters on election day. Counties with less than 25,000 active voters but more than 10,000 are required to have one vote center during the early voting period and three on election day. Counties with less than 10,000 active voters must have at least one vote center per county during the early voting period and on election day. During the 2016 general election 16 counties had more than 25,000 active voters, 15 counties had between 10,000 and 25,000 active voters, and 33 counties had less than 10,000.

## **State Expenditures**

**For FY 2017-18 only, this bill increases Department of State Cash Fund expenditures by \$26,368.** Costs are increased to perform modifications to the statewide voter registration system to allow counties to report vote center wait times which require 256 hours of computer programming at \$103 per hour.

Department of State workload increases beginning in FY 2018-19 and continuing in each general election year to conduct load testing on the statewide voter registration system and provide the test results to the General Assembly and any elections practices advisory boards. Workload also increases to post wait time measurement results on election day and to submit a report by March 1 of every odd-numbered year to the General Assembly describing the locations used for vote centers and the reason the use of any public building was denied. These workload increases can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

## **Local Government Impact**

This bill impacts county clerks in several ways. Costs are reduced by decreasing the number of required vote centers costs and by allowing vote centers to be closed on the first Saturday in the early voting period. The average cost to operate a vote center is approximately \$1,500 per day. Savings are generated from paying fewer election judges and reduced rental facility and supply costs for each day that the vote center is not required to operate. These savings are offset by the requirement that vote centers be open for a greater number of hours. Because county clerks have the option of opening more than the minimum number of required vote centers, exact savings will vary by county depending on the number of vote centers and the hours in which they are open.

On election day workload and costs increase for county clerks to collect hourly wait times and submit data to the Department of State. This impact will vary by county depending on the number of vote centers and the methods used to collect this data. Costs will further increase should a county decide to hire an election judge to meet this requirement. Election judge pay ranges from \$11-16 an hour.

Under current law, all counties must provide at least one ballot drop-off location and larger counties must provide one for each 30,000 active voters. Counties have discretion over security at each drop-off location. By requiring all counties with over 5,000 active voters to provide a twenty-four hour secure drop-off location costs are increased to add security to locations that currently do not have it.

Lastly, workload is increased for election officials to work with school boards and school administrators to determine if public school facilities can be used for vote centers.

**Effective Date**

This bill is deemed lost since the Senate laid the bill over until May 11, 2017, during third reading on April 24, 2017.

**State and Local Government Contacts**

Counties  
Local Affairs  
Secretary of State

County Clerks  
Higher Education

Education  
School Boards