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**SFA**

BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5216 (Substitute S-4 as reported)  
Sponsor: Representative Bruce Patterson  
House Committee: Redistricting and Elections  
Senate Committee: Government Operations

## **CONTENT**

The bill would amend the Michigan Election Law to require the Secretary of State to select a uniform voting system that would be used in all elections throughout the State, subject to the appropriation of money for this purpose. The bill also would require the Secretary of State to:

- Convene an advisory committee on the selection of the uniform voting system.
- Notify local units of government about the selection of a uniform voting system.
- Establish a schedule for the acquisition and implementation of the uniform system.

The bill would prohibit local units of government from purchasing a voting system other than the uniform system after receiving the notice from the Secretary of State.

These provisions would not apply until money was appropriated for the purpose of selecting, acquiring, and implementing the uniform voting system. If Federal money became available for this purpose, the Secretary of State would have to take steps to qualify for and appropriate that money. If an appropriation for this purpose were not enacted before January 1, 2006, the provisions of the bill would be repealed.

MCL 168.2 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Secretary of State produced a report in May 2001 advocating a uniform voting system using optical scan technology and it is assumed that this report reflects the action she would take under this bill. (Of the currently certified voting systems, only punch card, optical scan, and direct recording electronic (touch screen) systems remain in production.) The report detailed a four-year schedule for implementation of a statewide uniform voting system that would cost a total of \$26.1 million to \$38.7 million, \$14 million in the first year.

A voting technology study conducted jointly by the California Institute of Technology and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in July 2001 estimated the implementation cost for an optical scan voting system at \$6 to \$8 per voter. Following the Secretary of State's proposed implementation schedule, this model would cost the State \$39.9 million to \$53.3 million, including approximately \$16.3 million to \$21.7 million in the first year of implementation.

The bill may result in savings to local units of government. Currently, the purchase of voting systems and equipment is the responsibility of local jurisdictions. The bill proposes that the State adopt that responsibility, dependent upon an appropriation for this purpose. Since voting equipment has a life span of 15 to 25 years, almost all local units of government would be relieved of the obligation of purchasing a new voting system over that time period. The savings would vary widely by jurisdiction, depending upon the size of the jurisdiction and the type of voting system it otherwise will purchase.

Date Completed: 2-13-02

Fiscal Analyst: Jessica Runnels

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Analysis available @ <http://www.michiganlegislature.org>

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