Legislative Analysis

INACTIVE VOTER REGISTRATIONS

House Bill 4356 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Mike Hoadley
Committee: Election Integrity
Revised 5-14-25

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4356 would amend the Michigan Election Law to require the secretary of state to send, within 180 days after each general November election,[*] both of the following by forwardable mail to each registered voter who has failed to vote for 10 years or longer:

- A postage-prepaid return card, preaddressed to the appropriate city or township clerk, which the voter can use to verify their current address information and on which they must sign their name.
- A notice containing the following statement:

> "Secretary of state records indicate that you have failed to vote for 10 years or more. To confirm your status as a registered voter, please complete, sign, and return the enclosed card providing your current address to the appropriate city or township clerk at least 15 days before the next election. If you do not complete, sign, and return the enclosed card to the appropriate city or township clerk at least 15 days before the next election, you will be required to affirm your current address at the polls before you are permitted to vote. To keep your status as a registered voter, you must respond to this notice, vote, or engage in voting-related activity, including, but not limited to, requesting an absent voter ballot application or updating your voter registration, by the first business day after the second general November election that is held after the date on this notice."

A city or township clerk that receives a return card described above would have to compare the voter's signature on the card to the signature for that voter on the qualified voter file. If the signatures do not match, the clerk would have to identify that voter's registration record as challenged as provided in the act. The clerk would have to notify the voter that their signatures did not match and that their registration record is considered challenged. The notice would have to include the steps the voter must take to no longer have their registration record considered challenged.

If a notice sent by the secretary of state as described above is returned as undeliverable by the post office, the secretary of state would have to identify that voter's registration record as challenged as provided in the act. If the voter does not vote or engage in voting-related activity by the first business day after the second general November election[*] that is held after the date on the notice, the secretary of state would have to cancel that voter's registration and notify the appropriate city or township clerk of the cancellation.

MCL 168.509bb

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[*] General November elections are those held in even-numbered years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would result in an increase in costs of either $369,000 or $585,000 to the Department of State in the first year of implementation. Costs would be for postage of prepaid and preaddressed return mailings and would depend on whether the department would be able to use a postcard-size mailer or would need to use a full-size mailer. Postcard-size mailers would cost $369,000 and full-size mailers would cost $585,000. Ongoing annual costs would decrease after the first year to $37,000 or $59,000, depending on the mail size, as mailings decrease following the removal or confirmation of electors.

The department would be able to support costs of the bill from its ongoing annual budget. The bill would not have a significant fiscal impact on local units of government.

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