

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

PUBLISHED: 2/3/2026 10:53 AM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1419

Patron: Williams

Bill Title: Statewide referendum ballot questions; fairness and transparency requirements; Ballot question fairness Commission; readability standards; language accessibility; public comment; judicial review.

Bill Summary: Statewide referendum ballot questions; fairness and transparency requirements; Ballot question fairness Commission; readability standards; language accessibility; public comment; judicial review.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes

Items Impacted: Item 1

Explanation: See Below

Fiscal Summary: There is an anticipated fiscal impact due to the provisions of this bill. The General Assembly and the Division of Legislative Services (DLS) have determined a fiscal impact shown below. The Department of Elections (ELECT) is indeterminate as more information is provided the fiscal impact will be updated.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>	<u>FY2031</u>
Division of Legislative Services (DLS)		\$89,000	\$89,000	\$89,000	\$89,000	\$89,000
House		\$2,235	\$2,235	\$2,235	\$2,235	\$2,235
Senate		\$1,788	\$1,788	\$1,788	\$1,788	\$1,788
TOTAL	\$93,023	\$93,023	\$93,023	\$93,023	\$93,023	\$93,023

Position Impact:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>	<u>FY2031</u>
Division of Legislative Services (DLS)		1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	1	1

Fiscal Analysis: The provisions of this bill establish the guidelines for the Ballot question fairness Commission (Commission) in the event of a statewide referendum. It is unknown when or how often the provisions of this bill will come into effect, so it is not possible to determine the costs associated with it. If the provisions of this bill were to come into effect, the estimated cost per meeting will be approximately \$200 for compensation and \$1,588 for travel for the four members selected by the Speaker of the House of Delegates to be paid by

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

the Clerk of the House of Delegates, \$200 for compensation and \$1,588 for travel for the four members selected by the President pro tempore of the Senate to be paid by the Clerk of the Senate, and \$50 for compensation and \$397 for travel for the one neutral member to be paid by the Clerk of the House of Delegates as this is a House bill.

The bill provides for the Division of Legislative Services (DLS) to provide legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested. Currently, the Division provides such services to over 35 legislative branch entities during the interim between sessions. There are other pending bills and resolutions that also require DLS to provide such services. If the aggregate number of bills or resolutions pass, the resulting additional staffing responsibilities will necessitate one policy analyst position costing \$89,000 including salary and fringe benefits.

The provisions of the bill establish additional printing requirements that will increase ELECT's cost by an undetermined amount. ELECT is responsible for printing materials that are available to all localities of the commonwealth for polling locations and to voters. In addition to printing materials ELECT is required to advertise in newspapers to cover the state.

Other: N/A