

HB 412-FN – AS INTRODUCED

2013 SESSION

13-0474
03/09

HOUSE BILL **412-FN**
AN ACT relative to absentee voter applicant information.
SPONSORS: Rep. Cordelli, Carr 4; Rep. Reilly, Graf 9
COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill allows candidates to obtain absentee voter applicant information from either the secretary of state or the city or town clerk. This bill also authorizes fees for providing such information.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Thirteen

AN ACT relative to absentee voter applicant information.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Sending Absentee Ballots; Availability of Lists. Amend RSA 657:15 to read as follows:
2 657:15 Sending Absentee Ballots; ***Availability of Lists***. When the verification required by
3 RSA 657:12 or 657:13 has been made, the clerk shall retain the application and, without delay,
4 personally deliver, email, or mail to the applicant the appropriate ballot and materials as described
5 in RSA 657:7 through 657:8 or designate an assistant to deliver such materials to the applicant. The
6 clerk's option to email an absentee ballot to a voter shall apply only to absentee ballot applications
7 from UOCAVA voters. The clerk shall send absentee ballots in response to verified absentee ballot
8 requests until 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. The clerk may not designate as an assistant
9 any person who is a candidate for nomination or office or who is working for such a candidate. Any
10 ballots sent pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be mailed or delivered only by officials
11 from the city or town clerk's office and delivered only to the applicant. If the address to which the
12 absent voter's ballot is sent is outside the United States or Canada, such papers shall be sent by air
13 mail. Said clerks shall keep lists of the names and addresses, arranged by voting places, of all
14 applicants to whom official absentee ballots have been sent, and shall identify those official absentee
15 ballots which have been returned to the clerk and shall record the absentee voter applicant
16 information in the statewide centralized voter registration database. Candidates whose names
17 appear on the ballot and persons bearing notarized requests or copies of notarized requests from
18 candidates whose names appear on the ballot may obtain ***from either the secretary of state or the***
19 ***city or town clerk*** a list of absentee voter applicants, excluding voters who have presented to the
20 supervisors of the checklist valid protective orders pursuant to RSA 173-B; the lists shall not be
21 available for public inspection at any time without a court order. ***The secretary of state and city***
22 ***and town clerks may charge candidates a reasonable per page fee for each document***
23 ***provided under this section. If a candidate requests that the list of absentee voter***
24 ***applicants be provided on an electronic storage device, the secretary of state or city or town***
25 ***clerk shall, if practicable, accommodate the request; if the list is provided on an electronic***
26 ***storage device, no per page fee may be charged, but the secretary of state or city or town***
27 ***clerk may collect the actual cost of the device provided to the candidate.***

28 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

HB 412-FN - FISCAL NOTE

AN ACT relative to absentee voter applicant information.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Department of State states this bill, as introduced, will increase state expenditures and may increase state revenue by an indeterminable amount in FY 2014 and each year thereafter. The New Hampshire Municipal Association states this bill may increase local revenue by an indeterminable amount in FY 2014 and each year thereafter. There is no fiscal impact on county and local expenditures, or state and county revenue.

METHODOLOGY:

The Department of State states this bill would require the Department to provide lists of absentee voters to candidates upon request. The Department assumes it would be considered a one-stop-shop for candidates and most candidates would request lists for their entire district from the Department. It is also assumed this bill will not take effect until FY 2014. The Department states it will have costs associated with software changes, including new reports, to meet the requests for checklists. The Department estimates the software costs to be approximately \$30,000 per year depending on the extent of the changes that would be needed to meet the requirements of this bill. The Department anticipates an increase in telephone requests for the list of absentee voters, require increased communication with clerks to ensure the absentee voter data is up to date, and the need to develop software specifications and training to help prepare clerks to stay up to date with the absentee ballot mailing and reporting. As a result the Department estimates it will require an additional staff person to manage the workload involved with maintaining the absentee voter data. The Department assumes the following costs for the additional staff person:

	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Salary for Staff Position at Labor Grade 19	\$34,866	\$36,290	\$37,850	\$39,390
Benefits	23,067	24,779	26,625	28,600
Current Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total	\$61,933	\$65,069	\$68,474	\$71,990

The Department may collect fees related to providing paper documents. The Department is not able to determine the exact revenue from this but indicates it will be in the range of \$30 to \$100 a year.

The New Hampshire Municipal Association states this bill may increase local revenue by a nominal amount to the extent that municipal clerks do not charge a fee for the documents they provide and begin to.

This bill does not authorize or provide an appropriation for any additional positions.