



# SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

## STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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*This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.*

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**Bill Number:** H. 3310 Introduced on January 14, 2025  
**Subject:** Closed Primaries  
**Requestor:** House Judiciary  
**RFA Analyst(s):** Welsh  
**Impact Date:** January 20, 2026

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### Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill requires voters to be registered with a political party to vote in its partisan primary election or advisory referendum unless the party takes action to open its primary to independent voters. This bill directs the State Election Commission (Elections) and county boards of voter registration to collect, maintain, and administer party affiliation data. This bill also amends voter registration forms and oaths to include party affiliation, defaults voters to “independent” if no party is chosen, establishes procedures for changing affiliation, and creates procedures for affirming party membership at polling locations. This bill takes effect upon signing of the Governor. However, the bill specifies that in all primaries conducted before June 1, 2026, an elector is permitted to vote if he has not signed the affidavit required by this bill. Additionally, all political party primaries must be conducted pursuant to the provisions of this bill after May 31, 2026.

Elections anticipates this bill will represent a significant change to its Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS). Elections provided that its IT vendor, Kopis, estimates system changes needed to maintain and administer party affiliation data would represent about 800 hours of work resulting in a non-recurring expense of \$92,000 but notes the estimate may increase or decrease once a detailed project plan is completed. Elections anticipates requesting an increase in General Fund appropriations for this expense.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) also contacted all counties to determine the local expenditure impact of this bill. Responses received from the counties of Horry and Kershaw indicate the local expenditure impact on these counties is expected to be minimal and managed within current resources.

### Explanation of Fiscal Impact

#### Introduced on January 14, 2025

#### State Expenditure

This bill requires voters to be registered with a political party to vote in its partisan primary election or advisory referendum unless the party takes action to open its primary to independent voters. This bill directs Elections and county boards of voter registration to collect, maintain, and administer party affiliation data. This bill also amends voter registration forms and oaths to include party affiliation, defaults voters to “independent” if no party is chosen, establishes

procedures for changing affiliation, and creates procedures for affirming party membership at polling locations. This bill takes effect upon signing of the Governor. However, the bill specifies that in all primaries conducted before June 1, 2026, an elector is permitted to vote if he has not signed the affidavit required by this bill. Additionally, all political party primaries must be conducted pursuant to the provisions of this bill after May 31, 2026.

Elections anticipates this bill will represent a significant change to VREMS. Election's IT vendor, Kopis, estimates system changes needed to maintain and administer party affiliation data would represent about 800 hours of work resulting in a non-recurring expense of \$92,000 but notes the estimate may increase or decrease once a detailed project plan is completed. Elections will request an increase in General Fund appropriations for this expense.

**State Revenue**

N/A

**Local Expenditure**

This bill directs Elections and county boards of voter registration to collect, maintain, and administer party affiliation data.

RFA contacted all counties to determine the local expenditure impact of this bill. Responses received from the counties of Horry and Kershaw indicate the local expenditure impact on these counties is expected to be minimal and managed within current resources.

**Local Revenue**

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director