

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NUMBER: SB 815

SHORT TITLE: Precinct Boundaries

SPONSOR(S): Senators Rand, Ballance, Cochrane, Conder and Gulley

FISCAL IMPACT: **Expenditures:** **Increase (x)** **Decrease ()**
 Revenues: **Increase ()** **Decrease ()**
 No Impact ()
 No Estimate Available ()

FUND AFFECTED: **General Fund (x)** **Highway Fund ()** **Local Govt. (x)**
 Other Funds ()

BILL SUMMARY:

TO AMEND THE LAW RELATING TO VOTING PRECINCTS. Amends GS 163-28 to provide that the polling place for a precinct must be located within the precinct or on a lot or tract adjoining the precinct. Amends GS 163-132.1 to require state to participate in 2000 Census Redistricting Data Program (data program) so state will receive 2000 census data by voting precinct and be able to revise districts at all levels without splitting precincts and in compliance with US and NC constitutions and federal voting rights act. Amends GS 163-132 to require state participation in Phase II of data program so, to extent practical, precinct boundaries of all NC counties will appear on 2000 census maps or database.

Sets out detailed provisions on how state's efforts will be conducted, including duties of Legislative Services Office (LSO), county board of elections (county board), and executive sec'y-director (director) of State Board of Elections. After receiving Census Bureau's official block maps, county board must designate their precinct lines along block boundary lines on the maps. When necessary, county board must alter precincts, including any precincts approved under GS 163-132.1A, 163-132.2, or 163-132.3 or designated by local act, to conform to census block boundaries as shown on official block maps to be used for the 2000 census and to consist only of contiguous territory. If director determines that county board had not complied, the director shall not approve those precinct boundaries but shall alter them so that each precinct consists solely of contiguous territory and that each precinct's boundaries are coterminous with 2000 census block boundaries nearest to the precinct boundaries shown by the county board on the maps. These altered precincts shall then be the official precincts. Upon adoption of resolution by county

board and instead of altering precinct lines as required in the preceding sentence, director may combine (for census reporting purposes only) two or more adjacent precincts of the county into a combined reporting unit, if director makes findings specified in bill. Provides that after director approves precincts as set out above and before Jan. 2, 2000, no county board may establish, alter, discontinue, or create any precinct except by division of one precinct into two or more precincts using census 2000 block boundaries for that division, with exception for annexed area specified in bill.

Provides that despite provisions described above, county board may designate precinct boundaries on municipal or township boundaries that are not designated on the 2000 official census block maps, according to directives of the director and adopted to insure that all precincts shall be included on the 2000 census database. Amends GS 163-132.2 to require that boards in certain counties submit changes in precinct boundaries that comply with GS 163-132.2(a) to LSO before Jan. 1, 1996. Makes additional conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon ratification

PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S)/PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED: General Assembly, county governments

FISCAL IMPACT

	<u>FY</u> 95-96	<u>FY</u> 96-97	<u>FY</u> 97-98	<u>FY</u> 98-99	<u>FY</u>
99-2000					
EXPENDITURES:*					
GENERAL FUND	0	0	\$60,000	\$60,000	
0					
LOCAL	No Estimate Available				
POSITIONS:	0	0	0	0	
0					

* February, 1995 dollars

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY: Estimates of General Fund expenditures are based on actual costs the General Assembly incurred during Phase II of the 1990 Census Redistricting Data Program. From 1988 through 1990, the General Assembly spent roughly \$45,000 changing the precinct boundaries of the 48 counties with populations of 55,000 or greater. Most of this money (\$42,000) was spent on technical assistance provided by the Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. The remaining \$3,000 was spent on postage, printing and travel.

Estimates for 1997 through 1999 were derived by adjusting 1988-1990 costs both for inflation and for the greater number of counties involved in the redistricting process. Implicit in this estimate are the following assumptions:

- The state would achieve no cost savings in working with those 48 counties that gained experience from the 1990 Census Data Program.
- There is no relationship between county size and the costs associated with changing precinct boundaries.
- Increased workload would be handled with existing staff.

Costs associated with changing precinct boundaries would also be incurred at the county level, primarily in the form of labor to check and revise precinct boundaries. Presumably these labor costs would be handled with existing resources. However, to quantify costs to the counties with any accuracy, an in-depth survey of county governments would be required.

Finally, this fiscal note does not consider the costs the State would incur if it did not participate in the 2000 Census Redistricting Data Program. In other words, although participating in the data program will cost the state money, these costs may be much less than the costs the state would incur if its precincts did not correspond to the year 2000 census maps.

SOURCES OF DATA: Legislative Research Division, Legislative Automated Systems, General Assembly Disbursing Office, and State Board of Elections, Centers for Geographic Information and Analysis.

FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION

733-4910

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