FROM: EXECUTIVE OFFICE AND REGISTRAR OF VOTERS:

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: A.B. 668 (Gonzalez-Fletcher) Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018: Support, All Districts. [$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

ACTION: Policy
BACKGROUND:

Summary

Congress passed the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) in response to the problems faced in Florida during the 2000 Presidential Election. These problems, which were widely blamed on obsolete voting systems used by Florida’s counties, resulted in HAVA appropriating monies throughout the nation. Because of HAVA, California was provided with $252 million in funding for the replacement of county voting systems. During the same period, California voters passed Proposition 41, the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002 (VMBA) which provided $200 million in state funds for the replacement of county voting systems. These various funds were provided to counties as a reimbursement on a 3:1 matching basis, requiring counties to directly pay for 25% of their new voting systems.

Existing law, the Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2002, authorizes the Voting Modernization Finance Committee to issue and sell bonds in the amount of $200,000,000, as specified. Existing law authorizes a county to apply to the Voting Modernization Board for money from the proceeds of the sale of bonds to:

- Pay for or purchase new voting systems that are certified or conditionally approved by the Secretary of State;
- Research and develop new voting systems, or;
- Manufacture the minimum number of voting system units reasonably necessary to test and seek certification or conditional approval of the voting system, or test and demonstrate the capabilities of a voting system in a pilot program.

Specifically, AB 668 – The Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018 would place a bond act on the June 2018 ballot and if approved, appropriate $450 million for counties to purchase new voting equipment.

AB 668 – The Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018 would also:

1. Require a county to match state funds at a ratio of one county dollar ($1) for every three state dollars ($3), if the county is conducting elections pursuant to the California Voter’s Choice Act (CVCA) (SB 450 - 2016). If a county is not conducting elections pursuant to the CVCA, then the county must match at a ratio of one county dollar ($1) for every two state dollars ($2).
The California Voter’s Choice Act (SB 450 - 2016) permits select counties (Riverside County is not one of these select counties), on or after January 1, 2018, and all other counties, on or after January 1, 2020, to choose to conduct elections where all voters are mailed a ballot and where vote centers and ballot drop-off locations are available prior to and on election day, in lieu of operating polling places for the election, subject to a number of conditions.

Implementation of AB 668 in Riverside County, assuming the voters approve the bonds, would depend on whether the Board of Supervisors decides to opt the County into the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016).

- If the county chooses to adopt the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016), then the county must match state funds at a ratio of one county dollar ($1) for every three state dollars ($3) to receive money from the AB 668 Bonds.
- If the County chooses not to adopt the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016), then the county must match at a ratio of one county dollar ($1) for every two state dollars ($2) to receive money from the AB 668 Bonds.

Departmental evaluation of the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016) is still currently in progress. The Board will be presented with the choice to adopt/not adopt the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016) at a later date. (Support of AB 668 does not indicate support of the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016))

Preliminary analysis of the changes that would come from adopting the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016) include: a new voting system, electronic poll books, ballot on demand systems, vote by mail drop boxes, and accessible vote by mail systems.

Preliminary analysis of costs of purchasing a new voting system with and without adoption of the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016) are as follows:

- If the County adopts the CVCA (SB 450 - 2016), (110 vote centers) it would cost approximately $11.4 Million to purchase a new voting system. With AB 668, the state would pay $8.55 Million and the County would pay $2.85 Million for a total of $11.4 Million.
- If the County does not adopt SB 450 and stays with 600 polling places, it would cost approximately $18.4 Million to purchase a new voting system. With AB 668, the state would pay $12.26 Million and the County would pay $6.14 Million for a total of $18.4 Million.

**NOTE:** This is only the cost of a new voting system and does not include the cost of electronic poll books, ballot on demand systems, vote by mail drop boxes, accessible vote by mail systems, technology to facilitate electronic connection between polling places or vote centers, or vote by mail ballot sorting and processing equipment. Further cost estimates will be presented to the Board at a later time.

2. Allow counties to use the funds to purchase new voting systems, electronic poll books, ballot on demand systems, vote by mail drop boxes, and accessible vote by mail systems.
3. Allow counties to use the funds for the development of open source, non-proprietary voting systems.

**Impact on Residents and Businesses**
The action presented should not affect residents or businesses within Riverside County.

**ATTACHMENT A.** A.B. 668 (Gonzalez-Fletcher) Voting Modernization Bond Act of 2018.
**ATTACHMENT B.** A.B. 668 (Gonzalez-Fletcher) Fact Sheet