

# Multiple Agency Fiscal Note Summary

<b>Bill Number:</b> 1381 S HB	<b>Title:</b> Elections/language assist.
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## Estimated Cash Receipts

NONE

Agency Name	2025-27		2027-29		2029-31	
	GF- State	Total	GF- State	Total	GF- State	Total
Local Gov. Courts						
Loc School dist-SPI						
Local Gov. Other		1,440,000		1,440,000		1,440,000
Local Gov. Total		1,440,000		1,440,000		1,440,000

## Estimated Operating Expenditures

Agency Name	2025-27				2027-29				2029-31			
	FTEs	GF-State	NGF-Outlook	Total	FTEs	GF-State	NGF-Outlook	Total	FTEs	GF-State	NGF-Outlook	Total
Office of the Secretary of State	.0	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	.0	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	.0	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000
<b>Total \$</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>	<b>1,634,000</b>

Agency Name	2025-27			2027-29			2029-31		
	FTEs	GF-State	Total	FTEs	GF-State	Total	FTEs	GF-State	Total
Local Gov. Courts									
Loc School dist-SPI									
Local Gov. Other			2,400,000			2,400,000			2,400,000
Local Gov. Other	In addition to the estimate above, there are additional indeterminate costs and/or savings. Please see individual fiscal note.								
Local Gov. Total			2,400,000			2,400,000			2,400,000

## Estimated Capital Budget Expenditures

Agency Name	2025-27			2027-29			2029-31		
	FTEs	Bonds	Total	FTEs	Bonds	Total	FTEs	Bonds	Total
Office of the Secretary of State	.0	0	0	.0	0	0	.0	0	0
<b>Total \$</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Agency Name	2025-27			2027-29			2029-31		
	FTEs	GF-State	Total	FTEs	GF-State	Total	FTEs	GF-State	Total
Local Gov. Courts									
Loc School dist-SPI									
Local Gov. Other	Non-zero but indeterminate cost and/or savings. Please see discussion.								
Local Gov. Total									

## Estimated Capital Budget Breakout

<b>Prepared by:</b> Marie Davis, OFM	<b>Phone:</b> (360) 890-1163	<b>Date Published:</b> Final 2/15/2025
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# Individual State Agency Fiscal Note

<b>Bill Number:</b> 1381 S HB	<b>Title:</b> Elections/language assist.	<b>Agency:</b> 085-Office of the Secretary of State
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## Part I: Estimates

☐ No Fiscal Impact

### Estimated Cash Receipts to:

NONE

### Estimated Operating Expenditures from:

	FY 2026	FY 2027	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
<b>Account</b>					
General Fund-State 001-1	817,000	817,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000
<b>Total \$</b>	817,000	817,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000

### Estimated Capital Budget Impact:

NONE

*The cash receipts and expenditure estimates on this page represent the most likely fiscal impact. Factors impacting the precision of these estimates, and alternate ranges (if appropriate), are explained in Part II.*

Check applicable boxes and follow corresponding instructions:

- ☒ If fiscal impact is greater than \$50,000 per fiscal year in the current biennium or in subsequent biennia, complete entire fiscal note form Parts I-V.
- ☐ If fiscal impact is less than \$50,000 per fiscal year in the current biennium or in subsequent biennia, complete this page only (Part I).
- ☐ Capital budget impact, complete Part IV.
- ☒ Requires new rule making, complete Part V.

Legislative Contact: Desiree Omli	Phone: 360-786-7105	Date: 02/07/2025
Agency Preparation: Bonnie Luntzel	Phone: 360-704-5262	Date: 02/12/2025
Agency Approval: Tim Gallivan	Phone: (360) 763-2044	Date: 02/12/2025
OFM Review: Marie Davis	Phone: (360) 890-1163	Date: 02/15/2025

## Part II: Narrative Explanation

### II. A - Brief Description Of What The Measure Does That Has Fiscal Impact

*Significant provisions of the bill and any related workload or policy assumptions that have revenue or expenditure impact on the responding agency by section number.*

Differences between SHB 1381 and HB 1381:

- Section 2 has been removed in SHB 1381, eliminating the pilot program that lowered the threshold for language assistance in certain counties.

Updated Summary:

- Section 1(3)(a) directs the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) to designate covered language minority groups in counties requiring election language assistance. These designations will be based on the most recent population estimates from the American Community Survey and relevant decennial census data, with a deadline of August 1, 2025.
- Section 1(3)(b) requires OSOS to notify each covered county of its language designations and publish them in the Washington State Register within 30 days of census data release. Section 1(3)(c) establishes that these designations take effect upon publication.
- Section 1(6) mandates OSOS to create a grant program funding covered counties for voter registration notices, ballots, and other election materials in the designated minority languages.

### II. B - Cash receipts Impact

*Cash receipts impact of the legislation on the responding agency with the cash receipts provisions identified by section number and when appropriate, the detail of the revenue sources. Description of the factual basis of the assumptions and the method by which the cash receipts impact is derived. Explanation of how workload assumptions translate into estimates. Distinguished between one time and ongoing functions.*

No Impact.

### II. C - Expenditures

*Agency expenditures necessary to implement this legislation (or savings resulting from this legislation), with the provisions of the legislation that result in the expenditures (or savings) identified by section number. Description of the factual basis of the assumptions and the method by which the expenditure impact is derived. Explanation of how workload assumptions translate into cost estimates. Distinguished between one time and ongoing functions.*

Based on Office of the Secretary of State's (OSOS) analysis, three counties—Chelan, Douglas, and Grant—meet the definition of covered counties under Section 1(2). This determination is based on the most recent population estimates from the American Community Survey, combined with relevant decennial census data.

OSOS provides the State Voters' Pamphlet to assist county auditors in improving access to election information. Under this bill, OSOS anticipates producing three additional bilingual editions of the Voters' Pamphlet in English and Spanish. It is estimated that an average of 131,000 Voters' Pamphlets will be mailed across the three counties. The annual cost for composition, printing, distribution, translation, and community review of the translated materials is projected to be \$84,000 per fiscal year.

Section 1(6) establishes a grant program, contingent on appropriation, to assist counties in providing election materials in languages other than English. Based on the counties identified in Section 1(2), we anticipate that Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties will be included. The Office of the Secretary of State estimates a total cost of \$720,000 (\$240,000 per county x 3 counties), based on previous local government estimates for similar legislation.

OSOS incorporates standard costs into its estimates, including \$29,000 per FTE annually for goods and services (Object E). These costs cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription expenses. An administrative allocation rate of 15% is included (Object T) and is calculated based on OSOS cost allocation processes.

Part III: Expenditure Detail

III. A - Operating Budget Expenditures

Account	Account Title	Type	FY 2026	FY 2027	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
001-1	General Fund	State	817,000	817,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000
Total \$			817,000	817,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000

III. B - Expenditures by Object Or Purpose

	FY 2026	FY 2027	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
FTE Staff Years					
A-Salaries and Wages					
B-Employee Benefits					
C-Professional Service Contracts					
E-Goods and Other Services	84,000	84,000	168,000	168,000	168,000
G-Travel					
J-Capital Outlays					
M-Inter Agency/Fund Transfers					
N-Grants, Benefits & Client Services	720,000	720,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000
P-Debt Service					
S-Interagency Reimbursements					
T-Intra-Agency Reimbursements	13,000	13,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
9-					
Total \$	817,000	817,000	1,634,000	1,634,000	1,634,000

III. C - Operating FTE Detail: FTEs listed by classification and corresponding annual compensation. Totals agree with total FTEs in Part I and Part IIIA.  
NONE

III. D - Expenditures By Program (optional)

NONE

Part IV: Capital Budget Impact

IV. A - Capital Budget Expenditures

NONE

IV. B - Expenditures by Object Or Purpose

NONE

IV. C - Capital Budget Breakout

Acquisition and construction costs not reflected elsewhere on the fiscal note and description of potential financing methods.  
NONE

IV. D - Capital FTE Detail: FTEs listed by classification and corresponding annual compensation. Totals agree with total FTEs in Part IVB.

NONE

**Part V: New Rule Making Required**

*Provisions of the bill that require the agency to adopt new administrative rules or repeal/revise existing rules.*

NONE

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT FISCAL NOTE

Revised

Department of Commerce

<b>Bill Number:</b> 1381 S HB	<b>Title:</b> Elections/language assist.
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## Part I: Jurisdiction-Location, type or status of political subdivision defines range of fiscal impacts.

### Legislation Impacts:

- ☐ Cities:
- ☒ Counties: Costs to prepare bilingual voting instructions and materials.
- ☐ Special Districts:
- ☒ Specific jurisdictions only: Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties
- ☐ Variance occurs due to:

## Part II: Estimates

- ☐ No fiscal impacts.
- ☐ Expenditures represent one-time costs:
- ☐ Legislation provides local option:
- ☒ Key variables cannot be estimated with certainty at this time: Increased costs for subsequent fiscal years; additional counties impacted by requirements based upon Census results in subsequent years

### Estimated revenue impacts to:

Jurisdiction	FY 2026	FY 2027	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
County	720,000	720,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	720,000	720,000	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,440,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL \$</b>	4,320,000				

### Estimated expenditure impacts to:

Jurisdiction	FY 2026	FY 2027	2025-27	2027-29	2029-31
County	1,200,000	1,200,000	2,400,000	2,400,000	2,400,000
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	1,200,000	1,200,000	2,400,000	2,400,000	2,400,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL \$</b>	7,200,000				

In addition to the estimates above, there are additional indeterminate costs and/or savings. Please see discussion.

## Part III: Preparation and Approval

Fiscal Note Analyst: Allan Johnson	Phone: 360-725-5033	Date: 02/13/2025
Leg. Committee Contact: Desiree Omli	Phone: 360-786-7105	Date: 02/07/2025
Agency Approval: Alice Zillah	Phone: 360-725-5035	Date: 02/13/2025
OFM Review: Marie Davis	Phone: (360) 890-1163	Date: 02/15/2025

## Part IV: Analysis

### A. SUMMARY OF BILL

*Description of the bill with an emphasis on how it impacts local government.*

#### CHANGES BETWEEN ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE:

The substitute bill removes the pilot program requiring counties with populations between 125,000 and 225,000 people to provide language assistance during elections when more than 1.5% of citizens in certain language minority groups (LMGs) are of voting age or are qualified to register to vote, are limited-English proficient, and have not completed the fifth grade at a rate higher than the national average.

#### SUMMARY OF CURRENT BILL:

In addition to requirements under the federal program, counties must also provide language assistance during elections when: (1) more than 2.5% of voting-age citizens in that county are members of a single LMG; (2) those citizens are limited-English proficient; and (3) the illiteracy rate of voting-age citizens in the LMG is higher than the national average.

The definitions of a single LMG, limited-English proficient, and illiteracy rate, and the type of language assistance required, are the same as in federal law. Additionally, counties that contain all or part of an Indian reservation must provide language assistance during elections if more than 2.5% of the American Indian or Alaska Native citizens of voting age within the Indian reservation are members of a LMG and are limited-English proficient, and the illiteracy rate of voting-age citizens in the LMG is higher than the national average.

For purposes of this act, citizens who are not of voting age but are qualified to register to vote are included in the threshold calculations. Therefore, 17 year olds participating in the Future Voter Program and who are registered to vote because they will be 18 years old by the general election are included in threshold calculations.

The Secretary of State (SOS) must, no later than August 1, 2025, determine which counties are subject to the language assistance provisions. The list of covered counties is determined using the American Community Survey and relevant decennial census data and is updated every five years. Counties have one year to reach full compliance. A county's status as a covered jurisdiction remains in effect unless terminated by the SOS. County auditors may, after five years of their designation, petition for the SOS to terminate the designation if the LMG no longer meets the criteria for assistance.

The SOS must establish a grant program to provide funding to covered jurisdictions to implement the language access requirements. The act is null and void if specific funding

### B. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE IMPACTS

*Expenditure impacts of the legislation on local governments with the expenditure provisions identified by section number and when appropriate, the detail of expenditures. Delineated between city, county and special district impacts.*

#### CHANGES BETWEEN ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE:

This legislation would result in the reduction of these requirements for two counties (Benton and Skagit) along with expenditures of \$240,000 per county or \$480,000 total.

#### SUMMARY OF CURRENT BILL:

The potential costs for implementing this bill, including developing bilingual voter instructions and materials, is estimated to be \$720,000 per fiscal year. These costs would be incurred by three counties including Chelan, Douglas, and Grant. Costs per county are anticipated to be \$240,000 per county. It is possible that the number of counties impacted by these provisions could increase or decrease in future years based upon changes in Census results. These changes cannot be predicted with certainty and are indeterminate.

This analysis does not include costs incurred by counties already voluntarily providing bilingual election instructions and voting materials. It is assumed that these costs are likely similar in scope to estimates provided by the Washington State Association of County Auditors for counties impacted by this legislation, but these costs are not incorporated into the fiscal

impacts of this legislation because the counties would not have to alter their current practices.

Additional indeterminate costs are anticipated if the number of counties required to provide language assistance increases. The potential for new counties or languages to reach thresholds identified in this legislation is unknown and cannot be predicted.

#### DISCUSSION:

The cost for each county to comply with these requirements is estimated to be between \$140,000 and \$240,000 per county. These requirements will be new and will involve implementation, hiring, training and integration. Because of these uncertainties, the analysis assumes county costs will occur at the top of the range initially. Once these measures are established, jurisdictions will likely experience efficiencies however, because the total number of voters and the proportion of voters in non-English communities is likely to increase, this analysis assumes that overall costs will not decrease.

The total cost of \$240,000 consists of the following expenditure assumptions:

- \$90,000; one staff person responsible for providing all services in the new language(s), including translating ballots, all voting and outreach materials, providing customer service in-language, coordinating with community partners and working with community media.
- \$90,000; one staff person to provide customer service, cover when one staff member is out, providing proofing support and providing overflow support during peak work periods.
- \$10,000; temporary staff during high volume (i.e. general) elections.
- \$20,000; overtime translation on evenings and weekends during peak translation periods for two employees.
- \$12,000; agile and special duty needs.
- \$2,000; advertising for voter education and outreach.
- \$10,000; printing, binding and mailing foreign language election materials.
- \$6,000; translation services through third party vendors.

The total cost of \$140,000 consists primarily of the same assumption above; however, since there would be only one staff person the expenditures would be reduced by \$90,000 for salary and \$10,000 for overtime costs.

### C. SUMMARY OF REVENUE IMPACTS

*Revenue impacts of the legislation on local governments, with the revenue provisions identified by section number, and when appropriate, the detail of revenue sources. Delineated between city, county and special district impacts.*

#### CHANGES BETWEEN ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE:

This legislation would result in the reduction of these requirements for two counties (Benton and Skagit) along with revenue of \$240,000 per county or \$480,000 total.

#### SUMMARY OF CURRENT BILL:

The legislation requires an adequate appropriation by the Legislature in order for the provisions of this legislation to go into effect. The Office of the Secretary of State's fiscal analysis for this legislation identifies grants of \$240,000 per county. Counties receiving grants are identified as Chelan, Douglas and Grant. This analysis assumes funding and implementation of those grants.

#### SOURCES:

Local Government Fiscal Note Program, FN HB 1861 (2023)

