

**Local Government Mandate Statement
Kentucky Legislative Research Commission
2024 Regular Session**

Part I: Measure Information

Bill Request #: 2078

Bill #: SB 257

Document ID #: 5832

Bill Title: AN ACT proposing an amendment to Section 145 of the Constitution of Kentucky relating to restoration of rights.

Sponsor: Senator Gerald A. Neal

Unit of Government: City County Urban-County Unified Local Government
 Charter County Consolidated Local Government

Office(s) Impacted: County Clerk

Requirement: Mandatory Optional

Effect on Powers & Duties: Modifies Existing Adds New Eliminates Existing

Part II: Bill Provisions and the Estimated Fiscal Impact Relating to Local Government

SB 257 amends Section 145 of the Constitution of Kentucky to automatically restore the voting rights of a person convicted of a felony 3 years after completion of their imprisonment, probation, or parole.

SB 257 also updates clarifying language to include “mentally incompetent” and “election fraud.”

The fiscal impact of SB 257 on requiring local governments to add the above constitutional amendments to a ballot would be minimal, though for counties with smaller budgets the impact may be minimal to moderate. Section 256 of the Kentucky Constitution specifies that constitutional amendments are only added to the ballot for the general election in even-numbered years (“next general election for members of the House of Representatives”). Therefore, the constitutional amendment would be submitted to the voters in November, 2024.

Balloting and publishing proposed constitutional amendments is a regular duty of county clerks, paid for by the county fiscal court. According to information received in early 2020 from Harp Enterprises, a vendor which provides electronic voting machines to almost 100 Kentucky counties, there are additional programming costs associated with adding a new category (local option question or constitutional amendment) to the ballot on an already scheduled statewide election. For example, the cost to add a new category to the ballot for Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, with 286 precincts, has recently been estimated at between \$3,500 and \$4,500, and for Franklin County, with 44 precincts, the cost has been estimated at between \$1,700 and \$2,500.

Ballot printing costs are also a factor in election expenses. If the proposed amendment results in additional pages needed for the ballot, that would be an additional cost to the county clerk's office. It has been estimated that the cost of one extra page for a ballot is \$0.25.

Data Source(s): LRC Staff; Kentucky County Clerks Association

Preparer: Jacob Blevins (LG) **Reviewer:** KHC **Date:** 2/27/24