



**Fiscal Impact Statement for Proposed Legislation**  
**Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission**

**House Bill 1768**  
*(Patron—Martinez)*

**LD#:** 25102014

**Date:** 01/13/2025

**Topic:** Possession, etc., of nonhuman primates

**Fiscal Impact Summary:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>State Adult Correctional Facilities:</b> \$50,000 *</li> <li>• <b>Local Adult Correctional Facilities:</b> Cannot be determined</li> <li>• <b>Adult Community Corrections Programs:</b> Cannot be determined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Juvenile Direct Care:</b> Cannot be determined**</li> <li>• <b>Juvenile Detention Facilities:</b> Cannot be determined**</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">**Provided by the Department of Juvenile Justice</p>
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\* The estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 2 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, Special Session I, requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000.

Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4, fiscal impact statements prepared by the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission only include the estimated increase in operating costs associated with additional state-responsible prison beds and do not reflect any other costs or savings that may be associated with the proposed legislation.

**Summary of Proposed Legislation:**

The proposal creates §§ 3.2-6600 through 3.2-6605 related to the possession, sale, transfer, ownership, or breeding of nonhuman primates. The proposal prohibits such acts and provides exemptions for certain institutions, qualified transporters, those in possession of a state or federal exhibitor’s license, and individuals who lawfully possessed a nonhumane primate prior to July 1, 2026. The proposal also provides provisions for the seizure of such primates in certain circumstances.

A person who violates any provisions of the new sections or any local ordinance adopted pursuant to the proposal would be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person who has the right of property in or is custodian of the primate, whose willful act or omission in the care, control, or containment of such primate is so gross, wanton, and culpable as to show a reckless disregard for human life, and who is the proximate cause of such animal attacking and causing serious bodily injury to any person would be guilty of a Class 6 felony.<sup>1</sup>

**Analysis:**

Existing data sources do not contain sufficient detail to identify the number of individuals who would be impacted by the proposal. However, individuals convicted of the proposed felony may be sentenced similarly to offenders convicted under existing provisions.

<sup>1</sup> Convictions under the proposed felony would be eligible for the enhanced sentence credits specified in § 53.1-202.3, whereby offenders serve a minimum of 67% of the sentence ordered by the court.

According to Circuit Court Case Management System (CMS) data for fiscal year (FY) 2019 through FY2024, one offender was convicted of a Class 6 felony under § 3.2-6540.1(D) for failing to contain a dog that attacked a person and caused serious bodily injury. This defendant received a local-responsible (jail) sentence of five days.

It is possible that defendants convicted of the proposed felony could receive similar sentences to those convicted of a Class 6 felony under § 18.2-51 (unlawful wounding). According to Circuit Court CMS data for the same six-year period, of the 2,044 defendants for whom this was the primary, or most serious, offense, 25.0% did not receive any active term of incarceration and 32.1% received a local-responsible (jail) term with a median sentence of 6.0 months. For the 43.0% who received a state-responsible (prison) term, the median sentence was 2.0 years.

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**Impact of Proposed Legislation:**

**State adult correctional facilities.** By creating a new felony offense, the proposal may increase the state-responsible (prison) bed space needs of the Commonwealth. Available data are insufficient, however, to identify the number of defendants who may be convicted of the proposed felony or to estimate the number of new state-responsible sentences that may result from enactment of the proposal. Thus, the magnitude of the impact on prison bed space needs cannot be determined.

**Local adult correctional facilities.** Similarly, the proposal may increase local-responsible (jail) bed space needs, but the magnitude of the impact cannot be quantified.

**Adult community corrections programs.** Because the proposal could result in felony convictions and subsequent supervision requirements for an additional number of offenders, the proposal may increase the need for adult community corrections resources. Since the number of cases that may be affected cannot be determined, the potential impact on community corrections resources cannot be estimated.

**Virginia's Sentencing Guidelines.** As a new felony, convictions for the proposed offense initially would not be covered by the Sentencing Guidelines as the primary (or most serious) offense. Such convictions, however, could augment the Guidelines recommendation as additional offenses if the most serious offense at sentencing is covered by the Guidelines. The proposed felony would not be defined as violent under § 17.1-805(C) for Guidelines purposes. No immediate adjustment to the Guidelines would be necessary under the proposal. If the proposal is enacted, the Sentencing Commission in the future would conduct analyses to determine the feasibility of adding the new felony to the Guidelines system.

**Juvenile direct care.** According to the Department of Juvenile Justice, the impact of the proposal on direct care (juvenile correctional center or alternative commitment placement) bed space needs cannot be determined.

**Juvenile detention facilities.** The Department of Juvenile Justice reports that the proposal's impact on the bed space needs of juvenile detention facilities cannot be determined.

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**Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 2 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, Special Session I, requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000.**

**Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.**