

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUDGET
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

Through a separate program, Virginia ABC currently conducts 1,000 underage tobacco checks annually. Virginia ABC conducts these checks pursuant to a contract with DBHDS. DBHDS receives funding for the checks through a tobacco settlement grant and a supplemental appropriation. Virginia ABC special agents, because of their other job duties, are required to work overtime to conduct these 1,000 checks annually. Virginia ABC does not have the current capacity to conduct thousands of additional checks annually.

The number of tobacco checks required by current law, which Virginia ABC would be obligated to perform pursuant to HB 1946, is uncertain. The number of tobacco checks would additionally depend on how many violations occurred. Virginia ABC estimates approximately 8,000-9,000 additional tobacco checks may be required annually. Virginia ABC special agents would then be required to take such violations to Taxation through an administrative adjudication process and through the criminal courts for the criminal violation.

Because the legislation would result in ABC's Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE) conducting additional checks, BLE would require 12 additional frontline, sworn law enforcement officers throughout the state and 1 civilian analyst. Each agent would complete two full days of operations each week with the remaining days necessary for report writing, handling matters that go to an administrative or criminal hearing, and handling evidence. Hiring of underage buyers would also add additional expense.

Other: This bill is a companion to HB1946. If additional information becomes available from the Department of Taxation, this fiscal impact statement will be revised.