

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2025 General Assembly Session | 1/24/25

In accordance with the provisions of 30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of legislation impacting local governments.

HB2297: School boards; employment of school resource officers in each public elementary & secondary school. (Mark L. Earley, Jr.)

Bill Summary: School boards; employment of school resource officers in each public elementary and secondary school. Requires each school board to enter into a collaborative agreement with the local law-enforcement agency to employ at least one school resource officer in each public elementary and secondary school in the local school division and provides that no school board shall be granted any full or partial waiver from such staffing requirements. The bill contains a contingent effective date that states that the foregoing requirement shall become effective beginning with the fiscal year in which funding has been provided pursuant to the general appropriation act to fully fund such requirement.

Local Fiscal Impact: Net Additional Expenditure: X Net Reduction of Revenues:

Summary Analysis:

Number of Localities Responding: 4 Cities, 13 Counties, 4 Towns, 1 Other

Localities estimated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0 to \$ 24 million over the biennium.

Localities estimated a negative fiscal impact as recurring operating and personnel expenses and some non-recurring expenses, and few localities indicated no impact.

Commission on Local Government

Net Increase in Expenditures: Itemized Estimates by Responding Localities									
Locality	Nonrecurring Expense - Operating		Nonrecurring Expense - Capital		Nonrecurring Expense - Other		Total Increase in Expenses (Biennium Total)	Response Totals	
	FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27			
Albemarle County					109960	0	9,469,400	Cities:	4
Alleghany County							0	Counties:	13
Charlotte County							0	Towns:	4
Chesterfield County	250000					0	8,946,600	Other:	1
City of Alexandria						0	3,948,000	Total:	22
City of Richmond							8,440,463		
City of Virginia Beach							11,400,000		
City of Winchester	90000						340,000		
Fauquier County	266976	266976			801702	801702	4,006,150		
Mecklenburg County							0		
Montgomery County	11220						165,402		
Northern Neck PDC							0		
Prince George County	8630		529104				1,912,937		
Prince William County							38,300,000		
Pulaski County						0	3,220,000		
Rappahannock County							0		
Smyth County						0	2,857,717		
Sussex County							0		
Town of Chincoteague							0		
Town of Christiansburg							0		
Town of Rocky Mount							0		
Town of Victoria							0		

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
Albemarle County	<p>The investment to employ at least one school resource officer in each public elementary and secondary school in the County of Albemarle school division would total ~\$4,679,720. This estimate is based on the following assumptions: 1) "Secondary schools" are equivalent to Albemarle County's "middle schools" and 2) Albemarle County's school division includes 15 elementary schools and 5 middle or secondary schools for a total of 20 schools impacted by this bill.</p> <p>Currently the Albemarle County Police Department does not have personnel in place to contribute to what would be this collaborative agreement and, therefore, would need to hire accordingly. The hiring and training process for SROs is potentially a year-long endeavor, which must be considered with any funding effective date.</p> <p>The total estimate includes all equipment necessary to properly outfit a uniformed school resource officer. HB2297 mentions the grants shall not be used for any expense related to the purchase of firearms, handcuffs or other wrist restraints, or any stun weapon as defined. This equipment equates to an additional ~\$109,960 in one-time expenditures.</p>
Alleghany County	<p>Our county currently provides School Resource Officers in each school in our district. My concern is another unfunded mandate. If we encounter fiscal distress, we no longer have the autonomy to make adjustments where we see fit and will be bound by this mandate.</p>
Charlotte County	<p>It appears in the summary that the state is to fully fund this requirement. If that is the case, it would not increase expenses. I'm assuming that fully fund means all costs associated with the employment of these officers. Note, currently the school contracts with a 3rd party for security officers in two of our 5 schools.</p>
Chesterfield County	<p>Chesterfield County currently has 32 SROs and 66 schools (including two technical centers). This would mean that the county would need to hire an additional 34 SROs to have one at every school. The current average salary of the 32 SROs is \$86,700. When accounting for benefits the total reoccurring salary cost for an additional 34 SROs at the current average salary would be \$4,248,900. Additionally, there are \$50,000 included for recurring costs of fleet, cell phones, software, and radio charges. The one-time costs of \$250,000 are for the purchase of uniforms, computers and radio equipment. Additionally, as the county increases the number of school facilities in operation, there would need to be additional officers to match.</p>
City of Alexandria	<p>The cost to add a School Resource Office at Alexandria City Public Schools' elementary and middle schools (14 schools in total) would be approximately \$1.6M in ongoing personnel costs. An additional \$350,000 in non-personnel funding would be required to equip the additional positions with uniforms, hardware, phones, and vehicles. This estimate does not include the cost for new body worn cameras that are issued to each Alexandria City police officer.</p>

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
City of Richmond	The City of Richmond would need 35 additional school resource officers to cover all elementary and middle schools. Given national hiring trends, it is likely the city will have to move officers from patrol into these positions while working to hire and train enough replacement officers. This means we would need to pay overtime to cover minimum staffing in patrol until these roles are filled. The estimated expenditure changes are based on 32 officers at average overtime rate, 2 sergeants at average overtime rate, and 1 lieutenant at average overtime rate.
City of Virginia Beach™	Virginia Beach currently has SROs in all middle and high schools. These are sworn police officers and the City pays the cost, not the school division. There are currently a total of 30 SROs, if all elementary schools were to need SROs, an additional 55 FTEs would be needed- approximately \$5.7 million. I took the total cost of the current SRO division, divided by the number of current FTEs, and multiplied by 55 to come up with an estimate.
City of Winchester	We would need 2 additional police officers.. base salary \$50,000, benefits 12,500 \$62,500X2=\$125,000.00 2 cars for police officers
Fauquier County	the data shows the hiring of 9 new SROs, annual expenses and one-time expenses (vehicles, computers, uniforms, equipment). The "other" represents the purchase of vehicles.
Mecklenburg County	The County currently provides at least one SRO to every school in our County. If this bill were to progress, particularly since Enactment Clause # 2 provides that the act shall only become effective with funding, then the requirement of the DCJS SRO Incentive Grant Program that requires two years of certified LEO experience (see Section X.2. of the DCJS Fiscal Year 2025 School Resource Officer Incentive Grant Program, Guidelines and Application Procedures for School Resource Officers) should be lifted, because any constraints on the eligible pool of officers will make it harder to meet the requirements of placing an officer in every school.
Montgomery County	The cost estimates include recurring salary and benefits cost, as well as one-time uniform and sign-on bonus costs associated with bringing on an additional SRO. Montgomery County would need to bring on just one additional SRO to have one available in each school.
Northern Neck PDC	Planning districts are not a party to either school board or law enforcement arrangements.

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
Prince George County	<p>Without knowing the amount of funding the state would supply (if any) under Subsection S for SROs at each school, it really won't be possible for us to compute a good fiscal impact. We can assume the Legislation suggests that the Standards of Quality (SOQ) would be adjusted to include SROs as funded positions, and some state funding would be provided if SRO positions become SOQ-Funded Positions (a \$ amount per position, adjusted by the locality's Local Composite Index (LCI)). Our impact would be the difference. The state also only supplies a fraction of the funding needed for benefits (such as health insurance). To add another wrinkle, some localities (including Prince George) have School Resource Officer grant funding from DCJS that supplies a portion of the salary and benefits for SROs for a limited time (finite number of years) at some schools. Some School Divisions and localities also receive School Security Officer grant funding from DCJS (again for a finite number of years). Our Police Chief does not think that sworn School Resource Officers (who are sworn law enforcement officers) can truly be school employees. Funding, if provided at all, would be provide to the School Division. Our Police Chief indicates that the County Police Department would have to employ sworn SROs, not the school division. This legislation, as proposed, seems to have some "holes" from our perspective.</p> <p>We will have DCJS SRO Grant Funding for a portion of 2 School Resource Officers in place for FY2026 (\$149,920). We have 8 schools. We have computed 100% local impact for 6 school SROs (at \$99,667 per officer), and the local match portion + additional local funding provided for the DCJS 2 grant-funded positions (and have included \$0 SOQ state funding / revenue). We have included \$3,000 per officer in annual recurring operating costs (training, uniform, fuel); \$8,630 in non-recurring equipment costs for 8 officers (not covered in the grant) and 8 vehicles as capital costs at \$66,138 per equipped vehicle.</p>
Prince William County	Prince William County would have to hire an additional 66 officers to fulfill this mandate. Other costs associated with recruitment and training are estimated at \$650,000 annually.
Pulaski County	These costs are based on personnel costs at four (4) elementary schools in the county and the outfit and operating costs.
Rappahannock County	Rappahannock County has two schools and each is assigned an SRO. Hopefully new revenue will be available to divisions/localities that have been fulfilling this intent.
Smyth County	We have 14 schools in our school system. While we have been blessed with grant funding for 6 SRO positions through DCJS, we have been notified that those grant funds will not be extended beyond June 30, 2025. Should the requirements move forward without additional state funding support, the numbers above would be our costs. This would place yet one more burden on our real estate and personal property taxes, which are already being overly relied upon to help us balance our budget since they are our largest and most fluid income streams.
Sussex County	
Town of Chincoteague	

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
Town of Christiansburg	I would not anticipate any increase in expenditures associated with this change.
Town of Rocky Mount	We provide 2 SRO's for the School system and do not anticipate increasing that number.
Town of Victoria	Currently resource officers are provided in the elementary school in town by the county sheriff's office. If this were to change and the school board were to contract with the town for an SRO in the elementary school, then the town would need to add personnel above the current budget to cover the position.