Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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Bill Number: HB1126 **Patron:** Clark
Bill Title: Protection of native migratory fish; work group report.

Bill Summary: Directs the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources to convene a work group of relevant stakeholders to address the decline in Virginia's native migratory fish in the James River and Chesapeake Bay. The bill requires the work group to (i) evaluate the cumulative ecological impacts of surface water withdrawals excluded from the Virginia Water Protection Permit requirements on aquatic organisms and freshwater systems; (ii) review and identify how state agencies address particular needs of fish that are listed as threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species list or the Virginia Species of Greatest Conservation Need; and (iii) develop recommendations for (a) updating the regulations regarding surface water intakes excluded from permitting requirements to meet protective standards, (b) reviewing a statewide inventory of unpermitted intake structures, and (c) assessing the feasibility of installing measures to reduce aquatic organism mortality. The bill requires the Secretary to submit a report of the findings and recommendations of the work group to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources and House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources by October 1, 2027.

Budget Amendment Necessary: **No.** **Items Impacted:** **N/A.**
Explanation: This bill involves the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), and the Marine Resources Commission (MRC); however, no budget amendment is required.

Fiscal Summary: It is anticipated that this bill will have an indeterminate expenditure impact on the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources and DEQ. It is anticipated that implementation of this bill can be completed within current resources of the affected agencies.

Fiscal Analysis: This impact statement is preliminary. This bill requires the Secretary to convene a work group of stakeholders, including state agencies and higher education institutions. It also directs DEQ to provide technical assistance to the work group. The work group’s findings and recommendations are to be reported by October 1, 2027. This bill will have an indeterminate impact of workload of the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources and DEQ.

Other: None.