

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

PUBLISHED: 1/30/2026 7:56 AM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: SB646

Patron: Cifers

Bill Title: Citizen impacts included in fiscal impact statements and estimates.

Bill Summary: Requires any fiscal impact statement or other estimate of costs prepared for a legislative bill by the Department of Planning and Budget, the Department of Taxation, the Commission on Local Government, the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, the Virginia Retirement System, or any other agency of the Commonwealth to include a clear and conspicuous estimate of any potential citizen impacts attributable to such legislation. The bill also requires the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, at the request of any member of the General Assembly, to review a piece of legislation and prepare a statement reflecting (i) the potential fiscal impact of such legislation on the operations of state government and (ii) any potential citizen impacts of such legislation.

The bill defines "citizen impact" as any increase in personal fiscal impacts on a majority of residents of the Commonwealth estimated to result from the enactment of legislation before the General Assembly, including any inflationary impacts and increases in any (a) taxes, (b) costs associated with the use of electricity and fuel, (c) insurance premiums paid by policyholders, and (d) other generally applicable costs of legislation that will be borne by a majority of Virginia residents.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes

Items Impacted: See below

Explanation: State budget impacts are still in the process of being completed and refined. See further information below.

Fiscal Summary: Much of the impact of this bill is still in the process of being analyzed and refined. The magnitude of some impacts will depend on the level of precision and complexity of citizen impact estimates required. If more precise, quantitative, citizen impact estimates are required, the budgetary impact is expected to be greater than less precise, qualitative impact analysis. Budget amendments are expected to be needed regardless of the level of citizen impact estimate precision required. This impact statement will be updated as budgetary impacts are further known and refined.

Fiscal Analysis:

Department of Planning and Budget

The bill expands the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of Virginia residents. This is expected to require additional full-time staff due to the level of training and expertise required to complete this analysis given the short turnaround time required to provide FIS's. Providing citizen impact estimates could also delay DPB's

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

completion of fiscal impact statements during the General Assembly Session due to the additional workload on DPB staff in addition to the additional workload on staff at other state agencies that provide information to DPB regarding legislative impacts.

Preliminarily, a range of five to eight positions are expected to be needed depending on the level of precision and complexity of citizen impact estimates required. Further refinement of the estimated budgetary impact is still in the process of being completed. However, preliminary estimates for the cost of salary, benefits, and associated non-personal services expenses are \$625,602 for five positions and \$989,452 for eight positions. This assumes an average cost per position of approximately \$120,000 for salary and benefits and \$4,536 for associated non-personal services costs such as central services provided by other agencies for payroll and information technology, as well as training expenses. This is expected to require a general fund budget amendment, which would be put in Item 259 of HB 30/SB 30.

Commission on Local Government

The bill expands the Commission on Local Government (CLG) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of residents of the Commonwealth. The CLG is staffed and administratively supported by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The fiscal impact of this bill depends on the complexity of the citizen impact data required to be provided. At the lowest level of impact with qualitative analysis of citizen impacts, CLG expects to engage short-term consultant services to develop methodologies, train participants, and manage the citizen impact estimation process. Based on comparable recent consulting work, CLG preliminarily estimates this work to cost \$75,000 annually based on an hourly rate of \$150; however, this estimate is still being refined. If quantitative analysis of citizen impacts were required, the cost would be substantially higher. Further refinement of the estimated budgetary impact is still in the process of being completed. This is expected to require a general fund budget amendment, which would be put in Item 106 of HB 30/SB 30.

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission

The bill expands who can request a fiscal impact review by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to include any member of the General Assembly and expands reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of Virginia residents. JLARC reviews may currently only be requested by the chair of a committee in which the bill resides and do not include citizen impacts.

On average, JLARC reviewed four bills each session between 2015 and 2025 and estimates it can conduct approximately 15 reviews that include a qualitative analysis of citizen impact or 10 reviews that include a more precise estimate of citizen impact each General Assembly session within its existing staff capacity. The number of additional reviews that may be requested by expanding requests to all General Assembly members is unknown. If more reviews are requested in a General Assembly Session than can be accommodated within existing staff capacity, JLARC expects to contract with a third party to complete reviews. Based on JLARC staff experience and existing contract rates, it preliminarily expects each review to be approximately 20 hours of

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

work inclusive of a qualitative analysis of citizen impact or almost 27 hours inclusive of a more precise estimate of citizen impact, at an estimated hourly rate of \$70. This means that each additional request for bill review beyond current staff capacity is estimated to cost between \$1,400 and \$1,867 assuming total reviews remain below approximately 140. If the number of reviews approached 140 or more, meaning an average of one review was requested by each General Assembly member, existing JLARC staff capacity would need to be dedicated to reviewing the contractors' work and each request would be an incremental added cost. For perspective, 140 requests at \$1,400 to \$1,867 per request would require \$196,000 to \$261,380 of general fund support.

Department of Taxation

The bill expands the Department of Taxation (TAX) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of residents of the Commonwealth. TAX interprets the citizen impact information required by the bill as something it can accomplish using existing data to largely restate revenue impacts from a taxpayer perspective. In this case, current processes and staff can be used with minimal additional cost and would not require additional funding for TAX.

If the analysis of citizen impact requires more precise and complex estimates, such as dynamic forecasting of price-level impacts and cost-of-living effects, additional funding would be needed. TAX preliminarily expects specialized software and two additional positions (one economist and one analyst) would be needed to perform quantitative and qualitative analysis at an estimated annual cost of approximately \$300,000 from the general fund.

State Corporation Commission

The bill expands the State Corporation Commission (SCC) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of residents of the Commonwealth. Impacts to the SCC are not known at this time.

Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission

The bill expands the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission (VCSC) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of residents of the Commonwealth. The VCSC reviews legislation addressing a net increase in periods of incarceration using per-inmate operating cost data provided by the Department of Planning and Budget, pursuant to § 30-19.1:4, Code of Virginia. Impacts meeting the definition of citizen impact are primarily expected to be captured by reviews conducted by other state entities such as the Department of Planning and Budget and the Commission on Local Government. It is assumed that VCSC

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

analysis will continue to focus on the direct per-inmate operating cost of incarceration and it will not have a fiscal impact from this legislation.

Virginia Retirement System

The bill expands the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) legislative reviews to include estimates of potential citizen impacts affecting a majority of residents of the Commonwealth. Bills reviewed by VRS primarily impact state and local employees and employers and therefore are not expected to meet the definition of citizen impact. This legislation is not expected to have a fiscal impact on VRS.

All Other State Agencies

Subject matter experts are used at agencies statewide to determine the impact of proposed legislation. Information from these experts is incorporated into the impact statements issued by the state agencies outlined above. The effect on other agencies from citizen impact analysis is indeterminate.

Other: None