

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

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: SB519

Patron: Deeds

Bill Title: Department of Conservation and Recreation; Virginia Land Conservation Fund; land conservation goals and needs assessment; report.

Bill Summary: Establishes as goals of the Commonwealth the achievement of permanent conservation of 20 percent of the land area of Virginia by 2036 and 10 percent of the aggregate acreage of Virginia's urban areas by 2036. The bill requires the Department of Conservation and Recreation to submit an annual land conservation goals and needs assessment report including certain enumerated information no later than November 1 of each year to relevant committees of the General Assembly. The bill also removes the requirements that (i) the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation develop a needs assessment for future expenditures from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund and maintain such assessment on an annual basis and (ii) the Virginia Land Conservation Board of Trustees report with an estimate of the funds needed to achieve certain goals established by the Board.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: N/A

Explanation: This bill involves the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Forestry, the Department of Historic Resources, and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Forestry and Natural and Historic Resources. A budget amendment is not required as the impact is indeterminate.

Fiscal Summary: The fiscal impact of this bill is indeterminate. See fiscal analysis.

Fiscal Analysis: This impact statement is preliminary. This bill establishes land conservation goals in the Commonwealth, including the permanent conservation of 20 percent of the land area of Virginia and 10 percent of the aggregate acreage of Virginia's urban areas by 2036. The bill requires the Department of Conservation (DCR) to submit an annual report and needs assessment on land conservation goals established in the bill. DCR anticipates that completion of this annual report can be completed with current resources.

The resources required to achieve the land conservation goals in this bill are indeterminate. The introduced budget bill, HB30/SB30, includes appropriation under DCR, the Department of Forestry (DOF) and the Department of Historic Resources (DHR). Item 96 of HB30/SB30 provides \$437,500 in each year from the general fund for deposit to the Virginia Farmland and Forestland Preservation Fund administered by DOF. Item 363 of HB30/SB30 includes \$16.0 million in each year from the general fund for deposit to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund administered by DCR. Item 374 of HB30/SB30 provides \$5.3 million in each year from the general fund for deposit to the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund administered by DHR. Additionally, when available, DCR and DOF have utilized nongeneral and federal funds to acquire easements; agencies have also acquired easements through donations.

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Other: Section 2.2-1509.4., Code of Virginia, requires the Governor to include an appropriation in the budget bill for land preservation in each year. Any conflict between the Code of Virginia and the budget bill defaults to the budget bill.