

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

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB885H1 **Patron:** Hope
Bill Title: Court Date Reminder Program established.

Bill Summary: Establishes a Court Date Reminder Program, to be developed or procured by the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia, for the purpose of reminding criminal defendants to appear at each of their scheduled court appearances and to provide any related information. The bill directs the Program to send a text message notification to any defendant with a criminal case or traffic infraction in general district court or circuit court, allows a defendant to opt out of participating in the Program, and allows the Program administrator or his designee to use other communication methods to contact a defendant when such defendant is unable to receive text messages, including telephone, email, or other internet-based technology.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes

Items Impacted: 31

Explanation: This bill establishes the Court Date Reminder Program, which would require OES to develop a system that reminds criminal defendants to appear in court by sending a text message to any defendant who has a criminal case in general district court or circuit court. The message would be required to be sent prior to any hearing that requires the defendant's appearance.

Fiscal Summary: According to the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the estimated cost for modifying the electronic systems to implement these requirements is a one-time cost of \$1,515,440, and an ongoing cost of \$150,000 for the sending of SMS notifications for hearings.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

Agency	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
Supreme Court		\$1,515,440	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
TOTAL		\$1,515,440	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000

Fiscal Analysis:

The Office of the Executive Secretary currently offers the Court Alert Subscription System (CASS), which is an opt-in service that allows users to be notified of upcoming hearings regarding subscribed-to cases. The structure of CASS can be enhanced to accommodate the provisions of this legislation, though the necessary updates will be extensive across multiple systems that are maintained by OES. The estimated cost for modifying the electronic systems to implement these requirements is \$1,515,440.

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The legislation is expected to increase the number of notifications that are currently being sent, as the opt-out nature of the program will include more recipients than the current opt-in program. The estimated annual cost of sending more SMS notifications for hearings is \$150,000.

Other: Similar to SB475.