

Department of Housing and Community Development

Commission on Local Government

**Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact
2005 General Assembly Session**

Bill: HB 1798

Patron: Albo

Date: February 1, 2005

In accordance with the provisions of §§ 30–19.03 through 30–19.03:1.1 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced bill:

I. Bill Summary

HB 1798 would deny most state and local public benefits to those persons who cannot provide documentary proof that they entered the United States legally. Local governments would be required to establish processes to screen applicants for public benefits in order to determine eligibility based on their immigration status.

II. Fiscal Impact Analysis

The Commission on Local Government received fiscal impact estimates concerning HB 1798 from the Counties of Augusta, Botetourt, Campbell, Fairfax, and Rockingham and the Cities of Lynchburg, Richmond, Roanoke, and Virginia Beach. Rockingham County was unable to estimate the fiscal impact of HB 1798 from the information available. The Cities of Lynchburg and Roanoke reported no additional expenditure from this measure because the localities currently provided the services required or that illegal aliens within their jurisdiction rarely apply for public benefits. The Counties of Augusta, Botetourt, Campbell, Fairfax, and the City of Richmond reported that their net additional expenditure to implement this legislation would be less than \$5,000. The City of Virginia Beach estimated that the impact of HB 1798 would be greater than \$5,000, but it was unable to provide an actual dollar amount because the scope of the local public benefits affected by the legislation could not be determined.

Fairfax County noted that HB 1798 would bar the County from providing illegal aliens with services related to pregnancy testing and family planning, non-emergency primary health care, and the Community Services Board. Campbell County indicated that it has recently gained access to the federal legal alien database, so checking the background on applicants for public benefit may be less cumbersome.

III. Conclusion

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HB 1798 is not expected to impose a significant net additional expenditure for affected local governments in the Commonwealth. However, depending on the size of an immigrant community within a locality, the state and local public benefits affected by this legislation, and other factors, local governments could confront initial nonrecurring costs for staff training.