

Department of Planning and Budget 2006 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number HB68

House of Origin ☒ Introduced ☐ Substitute ☐ Engrossed
Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. Patron Callahan

3. Committee Courts of Justice

4. Title Courts Technology Fund; created, increase in certain fees.

5. Summary/Purpose: Creates a special non-reverting fund to be administered by the Supreme Court of Virginia funded by (i) a \$10 increase in clerks' fees for civil case filings in the district and circuit courts, (ii) doubling the filing fee in the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court to \$50, and (iii) a \$14 increase in the Supreme Court fee for a law license certificate and a certificate of qualification. Money in the Fund is to be allocated at the direction of the Supreme Court of Virginia to staff, advance, update, maintain, replace, repair and support the telecommunications and technology systems of the judicial system. Revenues raised in support of the Fund shall not be used to supplant current funding to the judicial branch.

6. Fiscal Impact Estimates are: Preliminary. See item 8.

6a. Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2006-07	\$7,940,000	0	0200
2007-08	\$8,178,200	0	0200
2008-09	\$8,423,550	0	0200

6b. Revenue Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2006-07	\$7,940,000	0	0200
2007-08	\$8,178,200	0	0200
2008-09	\$8,423,550	0	0200

7. Budget amendment necessary: Yes, item 30.

8. Fiscal implications: This legislation will create the non-reverting Courts Technology Fund. The revenue for the Courts Technology Fund will be funded by a \$10 increase in clerks' fees for civil case filings in district and circuit courts, a \$25 increase in the filing fee for Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, and a \$14 increase for a law license certificate and a certificate of qualification.

According to the Supreme Court, these additional funds will provide the resources to continue to re-build the court system's technology infrastructure, thereby safeguarding current operations, and laying the foundation for expansion and service delivery enhancements. This effort would:

- Ensure that every judge, clerk, staff, and magistrate has the automation tools needed to perform their jobs.
- Allow for easier, faster system changes and updates in response to legislative mandates and management requirements.
- Facilitate the development of expanded interfaces for data exchanges with other agencies and authorities.
- Enable development of the Judicial Intranet (secure network with e-mail or groupware), for information sharing and transaction processing). This will also allow access to data maintained at other agencies, such as the Virginia Criminal Information Network.
- Guarantee courts timely access to mainframe systems and data.
- Enable user-friendly access to information (including user-initiated ad hoc queries).
- Strengthen data security, and emergency recovery capabilities.
- Achieve significant efficiencies from hardware and software standardization -- in user training, support, and troubleshooting.
- Permit OES to provide the courts with reliable, secure access to the Internet.

In addition, the Department of Judicial Information Technology (DJIT) has developed a program that allows citizens to pay fines and costs online for pre-payable offenses in 118 district courts. The online collections average approximately \$1 million per month. Additional funding is needed to expand the use of online collections so that this important service can be made available in all Virginia courthouses.

9. Specific agency or political subdivisions affected: Court System

10. Technical amendment necessary: No

11. Other comments: Included in the Governor's budget is \$250,000 for fiscal year 2007 to finance a study of the technology needs of the court system and to develop a comprehensive technology plan.

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