

Department of Planning and Budget 2008 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB 1174

House of Origin ☐ Introduced ☒ Substitute ☐ Engrossed

Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. Patron: Lingamfelter

3. Committee: Appropriations

4. Title: Office of Immigrant Assistance

5. Summary: Establishes an Office of Immigrant Assistance within the Department of Social Services to assist persons lawfully entering the United States and the Commonwealth for the purpose of becoming citizens. This office is charged with providing advice and assistance with the citizenship application process as well as employment, housing, and services for eligible immigrants.

6. Fiscal Impact Estimates:

Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2008	-	-	-
2009	\$401,774	2.0	General
2010	\$238,774	2.0	General
2011	\$238,774	2.0	General
2012	\$238,774	2.0	General
2013	\$238,774	2.0	General
2014	\$238,774	2.0	General

7. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes, Item 337.

8. Fiscal Implications are preliminary: There are estimated to be 433,200 foreign born persons in Virginia who are not United States citizens based on data from the United States Census Bureau and the University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Of this number, 20 percent or 86,640 ($433,200 \times .20$), are estimated to be in Virginia illegally. Based on this, 346,560 ($433,200 - 86,640$) individuals could potentially be served by the Office of Immigrant Assistance as established by this legislation.

It is assumed that the Office of Immigrant Assistance (OIA) would be an extension of the Office of Newcomer Services (ONS) and would coordinate and provide referrals for immigrant assistance, rather than providing direct services to immigrants. Currently, ONS provides assistance to persons from around the world who have been forced to flee their homeland because of wars, armed conflicts, or gross violations of civil rights. ONS already has an existing network of local service providers that provide citizenship services, language and employment assistance, as well as understand the complexities of integrating the foreign

born into Virginia communities. As such, there would be no cost to the department for the services provided to refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, victims of human trafficking, and unaccompanied refugee minors, which are about seven percent of the total immigrant population. However, there would be additional costs to the department for the other immigrant population. This legislation could also potentially impact other agencies if their service populations increase due to referrals from Department of Social Services for employment, housing, and other services.

There are two areas of cost involved in establishing an OIA at the department, staffing expenses and the cost of a public outreach campaign. The ONS is currently funded by the federal Refugee and Entrant Assistance grant. Due to the restrictive nature of this grant, these funds cannot be used to fund the OIA. It is estimated that two additional positions consisting of a program administration manager (pay band 5) and a program administration specialist (pay band 5) will be needed. The program administration manager would provide in-house expertise in immigration needs and available services. The program administration specialist would be knowledgeable about immigration needs, monitor the quality of service delivered by the local service providers, and work closely with the program administration manager to expand the network of local service providers. Using a mid-range salary of \$64,654 for the program manager and an entry level salary of \$40,959 for the program administration specialist, salaries and benefits for these staff are estimated to be \$146,925 annually. Funds to cover the routine operating costs of postage, office supplies, travel, telephone, rent, and etc. are estimated at \$7,570 per year for each employee. One-time costs of \$6,500 per employee are included in the first year for office furnishings and equipment.

Currently, the salary, benefits, and operating costs for the current director of ONS are estimated at \$106,833. These costs are charged to the Refugee Entrant Assistance grant. Based on projected staff time spent in ONS and OIA, it is assumed that 25 percent or \$26,709 of the director's salary and operating costs must be charged to the general fund as a result of this legislation. Personnel, operating, and equipment costs for this bill are estimated at \$201,774 in the first year and \$188,774 each year thereafter.

In order for the OIA to be effective there must be a targeted public outreach campaign to make immigrants aware of the OIA and services it provides. The public outreach campaign would include, but not be limited to, public service announcements, pamphlets and publications, press releases, posters, promotional items, graphic design, and market boards. Public outreach must be done in multiple languages given the targeted audience, immigrants seeking citizenship, thereby increasing the cost. It is estimated to cost approximately \$200,000 in the first year and \$50,000 each year thereafter to conduct a public outreach campaign in multiple languages for the immigrant population.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:
Department of Social Services

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: The introduced budget includes \$250,000 each year to provide grants to community based programs serving legal permanent residents. The general fund support will allow the Office of Newcomer Services to utilize a portion of their time in the distribution of

the required grants. It is assumed that the intent of this legislation does not overlap with the grant funding provided in the budget. Therefore, none of the costs associated with this bill is offset.

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cc: Secretary of Health and Human Resources