Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact
2012 General Assembly Session

Bill: **HB 242** **Patron:** **Cline** **Date:** **January 23, 2012**

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

I. Bill Summary

HB 242 requires that the Cooperative Extension Service (Extension) maintain a local office with at least one employee in each county in the Commonwealth.

II. Fiscal Impact Analysis

The Commission on Local Government (CLG) received fiscal impact analyses from 10 localities – the Counties of Campbell, Chesterfield, Carroll, Henrico, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and York.

Nine of the respondents – the Counties of Campbell, Chesterfield, Carroll, Henrico, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, and Stafford – indicated that the bill will not result in a fiscal impact. The Counties of Campbell, Carroll, Chesterfield, Henrico, Prince William, Rappahannock, and Spotsylvania all stated that they currently have a local office of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Of the ten localities that provided input on this bill, only York County anticipated an additional cost. York County responded that the provisions of the bill would increase their expenditures by less than $5,000. However, York County has a local Extension office, and the county is currently in compliance with the provisions of the bill.

III. Conclusion

The provisions of HB 242 are only applicable to counties. The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (Extension) currently has 107 local offices, and, according to their website, there is an extension office in every county in Virginia. HB 242 also requires that the Extension have at least one employee in each county.

At present, localities reimburse Extension for a percentage of the salaries and fringe benefits associated with the Extension employees located in the jurisdiction. Extension is funded by a combination of federal, state and local funds and works differently in different localities; the percentage reimbursed by localities may also vary by job classification. If there is not currently at least one employee in a county Extension office, HB 242 would require that one be hired, and the affected county would be responsible for reimbursing the Extension for a percentage of the salary and benefits associated with the position, though the bill does not specify the type of position that would be required (e.g., Extension agent, unit coordinator, administrative support, etc.).

In addition, the bill does not specify whether the position must be full-time, and some county Extension offices currently share employees. If at least one full-time employee is required in every county Extension office, the counties, if any, that currently share a single employee would be required to hire another position and reimburse Extension for a share of the salary and benefits, which would result in an additional expenditure imposed on the county. Likewise, any counties that do not presently have at least one Extension office employee would be required to hire one and would be responsible for funding a share of the employee's salary and benefits.