

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact
2013 General Assembly Session

Bill: HB 1730 **Patron:** Cole **Date:** January 21, 2013

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 1730 requires each local school board to establish a collaborative agreement with local law-enforcement agencies to employ one full-time uniformed school resource officer in every school in the local school division.

II. Fiscal Impact Analysis

The Commission on Local Government (CLG) received fiscal impact statements from 17 localities – the Counties of Augusta, Campbell, Henrico, Prince Edward, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland; the Cities of Chesapeake, Danville, Lynchburg, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Winchester; and the Towns of Christiansburg, Louisa, and Strasburg. The CLG also received responses from two public school divisions – Orange County and Roanoke County.

Two of the responding localities – the Towns of Louisa and Strasburg – reported that they would not experience a net increase in expenditures. Louisa stated that schools and the Sheriff's Office are funded by Louisa County.

The remaining seventeen respondents – the Counties of Augusta, Campbell, Prince Edward, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Spotsylvania, and Westmoreland; the Cities of Chesapeake, Danville, Lynchburg, Norfolk, Virginia Beach and Winchester; the Town of Christiansburg; and the public school divisions of the Counties of Orange and Roanoke – reported that they would experience an expenditure increase of over \$5,000. The estimates ranged from \$55,271 per year in Prince Edward County to \$7,000,000 per year in the City of Virginia Beach. Listed below are the expenditure estimates:

Augusta County:	\$1,400,000
Campbell County:	242,500
Henrico County:	5,078,700
Prince Edward County:	55,271
Rappahannock County:	67,000
Rockingham County:	860,000
Spotsylvania County:	634,400

Westmoreland County:	383,000
Chesapeake City:	4,296,000
Danville City:	1,005,802
Lynchburg City:	2,320,375
Norfolk City:	1,927,862
Virginia Beach City:	7,000,000
Winchester City:	222,932
Christiansburg Town	410,000
Orange County PS:	434,758
Roanoke County PS:	2,628,744

Augusta County noted that start up costs would reoccur as vehicles and equipment are replaced over time. They also stated that with cuts to programs and positions, it will be difficult for the County to cover its share of 16 full-time employees to serve as resource officers.

Campbell County indicated that they would need to hire an additional eight sworn officers to comply with HB 1730. They also included non-recurring start up costs in their estimate, which include vehicles and equipment. The County also indicated some savings from transferring operating costs of their current school resource officers from a County-only expense to a Standards of Quality (SOQ) based expense.

Henrico County stated that they would need to hire 44 officers in order to be in compliance with this legislation. They estimated that they would experience \$48,022 in one-time start up costs per officer. The County currently has 27 uniformed school resource officers on staff.

Prince Edward County's estimate consists of salary and benefits costs as well as uniforms and equipment for a new school resource officer.

Rappahannock County stated that they have only two public schools and already have one school resource officer. Their estimate includes costs for the recruitment, salary, and benefits of the additional officer they would need to hire to comply with HB 1730.

Rockingham County stated that they would need to hire an additional 20 school resource officers in order to be in compliance.

Spotsylvania County stated that they would need to hire an additional 17 school resource officers. They included start up costs (i.e. uniforms, testing, vehicles, equipment, etc.) in their estimate. The County also made an assumption for revenues they could receive through SOQ.

Westmoreland County would need to provide school resource officers in four schools within the county and an additional two schools in the Town of Colonial Beach. At present, they have a part-time resource officer assigned to the county school district.

While the Sheriff's Office may experience some savings through SOQ, the school division will not.

The City of Chesapeake has 48 public schools and would need to hire an additional 37 officers to be in compliance with HB 1730. Because they would have to hire so many additional staff, they assume that supervisory positions would also need to be filled. Also included in estimated start up costs are training expenses, uniforms, and equipment.

The City of Danville stated that they would need to hire 14 school resource officers in order to comply with the provisions of HB 1730. Their start up costs include training and a vehicle.

The City of Lynchburg indicated that they would need to hire 19 new officers. Their estimate also includes the purchase of vehicles and equipment as well as fuel and maintenance costs.

The City of Norfolk already has school resource officers in its 15 middle and high schools. To comply with HB 1730, they would need to hire 33 additional officers for their elementary schools. They also expressed concern over whether the legislation would require school resource officers in preschools and special purpose schools. If so, their estimate would increase by \$175,000.

The City of Virginia Beach would need to hire 56 school resource officers for its 56 elementary schools. As a result of HB 1730, they stated that they may also have to enhance security systems and harden school facilities. They also mentioned that with declining real estate revenues, the additional costs associated with HB 1730 will be difficult to manage.

The Town of Christiansburg would need to hire officers for six schools located within the town limits. They expressed concern about being forced to fund this new mandate with limited resources.

Orange County Public Schools indicated that even if additional state funding is provided for the new school resource officers, HB 1730 will require additional local resources that will constrain the school board's ability to allocate its limited funding. They also worry that unforeseen consequences could be placed on the County Sheriff's Office.

Roanoke County Public Schools indicated that they would need to hire an additional 16 school resource officers in order to be in compliance. They indicate additional future costs to replace uniforms, equipment, vehicles, and to attend training.

III. Conclusion

HB 1730 requires each local school board to establish a collaborative agreement with local law-enforcement to employ a full-time uniformed school resource officer in every public school. The costs that localities face will be the salary and benefits for the new officer, training costs, equipment, uniform, and a police vehicle. In order for there to be no fiscal impact to a locality, they must already station a uniformed officer in every public school in their jurisdiction.

As indicated by responding localities, the financial impact of HB 1730 is significant. In some cases, localities believe that compliance with this legislation will cost them over \$1 million per year.

The primary cost driver inherent in HB 1730 is the population of the locality. Larger localities have more public schools and will need to hire more officers. Another factor is the number of school resource officers already on staff. A locality with more officers on staff will have smaller increased costs. Finally, localities in Northern Virginia will experience a higher increase in costs than the rest of the state because their salary and benefits packages are larger.