

Department of Planning and Budget

2020 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB993S1

House of Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Locke

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: State Health Commissioner; local health director; additional degrees; variance.

5. Summary: Requires that the State Health Commissioner possess a Doctor of Public Health degree, a Master of Public Health degree, or a doctorate in the area of public health in place of existing qualifications. The bill allows local health directors to possess a Doctor of Public Health degree, a Master of Public Health degree, or a doctorate in the area of public health as an alternative to the current requirement that each local health director be a physician licensed to practice medicine in the Commonwealth. The bill states that the Commissioner may grant a variance to a state law or regulation of the State Board of Health when the Commissioner determines that, upon review of an application from a county, city or town, the applicant for such variance has demonstrated that the implementation of a regulation would impose a substantial financial or programmatic hardship and the variance would not adversely affect the safety and well-being of residents of the county, city, or town or the Commonwealth.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: See item #8.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Indeterminate.

8. Fiscal Implications: The total impact this bill would have on the Commonwealth cannot be determined. Currently, as required by the code, all local health directors are licensed physicians and in some health districts the only licensed physician on staff. The bill would allow a local health director to not be a licensed physician if they meet other qualifications. According to §54.1-2957, a nurse practitioner shall practice in consultation with a licensed physician in accordance with a practice agreement between the nurse practitioner and the licensed physician. In order to meet current code requirements that a nurse practitioner shall practice in consultation with a licensed physician, some local health departments may need to hire or contract with a licensed physician to fulfill this requirement. It cannot be determined if a local health department would have a local health director that is not a licensed physician in the future.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: The Virginia Department of Health and all local health departments.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.