

Department of Planning and Budget 2008 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB130

House of Origin X Introduced ___ Substitute ___ Engrossed
Second House ___ In Committee ___ Substitute ___ Enrolled

2. **Patron:** Lewis

3. **Committee:** Health, Welfare and Institutions

4. **Title:** **Death certificates made available at local health departments**

5. **Summary:** Requires death certificates to be made available, upon request, at any local health department in the Commonwealth, regardless of the place of death.

6. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** See item #8.

7. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** No.

8. **Fiscal Implications:** The fiscal impact of the bill is uncertain due to the following factors:

- *Increase in workload.* The Department of Health's Division of Vital Records (DVR) does not yet have an electronic death database; therefore, providing copies of death certificates to local health departments would be a manual process. Currently there are three ways (walk-in, mail-in and Vital Chek) an applicant can obtain a vital record from DVR. If this proposed bill passes, DVR would be required to develop and implement a fourth method of issuing death certificates and assign a dedicated person to handle the telephone calls from the local health departments requesting death certificates. He or she would also be responsible for researching the files, such as determining which local health department the death certificate is filed, and faxing a copy of the death certificate, if the quality of the death certificate allows it to be faxed. A fax solution will essentially double the work involved in creating a death certificate as the certificate is basically being created both at the site with the certificate and the site delivering it.
- *Increase in customers.* While the overall number of requests for death certificate copies would probably not increase, the requests might occur in different locations, which could create staffing challenges.
- *Upgrade in technology/equipment.* If the quality of the death certificate allows the record to be faxed, and due to the confidential data on the certificate, DVR and the local health departments must have a minimum G3 fax machine which allows for an encryption device with multiple mailboxes with a secure pin password capacity. There will be an annual cost per device for the use of the encryption software. The overall estimated cost could be as high as \$4,000 per local health district, but it is unclear how many of the 119 local health departments within the 35 health districts would need upgrades.

9. **Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Virginia Department of Health

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: The Commonwealth CIO has granted planning approval for the development of an electronic death registration system. The electronic death registration system would allow local health departments to be granted access to death certificates in order to issue certified copies. The expected completion time of the electronic death registration system is sometime in FY 2010.

Date: 1/14/2008 lrj

Document: HB130.doc

cc: Secretary of Health and Human Resources