

Department of Planning and Budget 2012 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB 1126

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

2. Patron: Bell, Robert B.

3. Committee: House Courts of Justice

4. Title: Sanctions with Unified Rapid Enforcement (SURE)

5. Summary:

The proposed legislation would establish a new sentencing program for nonviolent felony offenders who violate the conditions of their probation supervision. The program would not be implemented in all judicial circuits until the completion of a two-year pilot program administered by the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission. Language in the proposed budget bill directs the commission to select no more than 10 jurisdictions as pilot sites.

Under the program, a nonviolent felony offender on probation who has been referred to court for revocation of his probation shall be given the option by the court, if it finds good cause to believe that the terms of supervision have been violated, to enter the Sanctions with Unified Rapid Enforcement (SURE) program, rather than potentially have his probation revoked and the remainder of his sentence to prison reimposed. The defendant shall also be given the opportunity to enter a drug treatment court program if one exists in the locality and if an assessment finds that the defendant is addicted to, or dependent on, a controlled substance or substances.

Offenders participating in the SURE program are subject to immediate and certain sanctions for violations of the conditions of probation supervision. If an offender violates any provision of supervision, the probation and parole officer must immediately have the offender arrested. The offender must be brought before the court within 24 hours of being taken into custody. If the court finds good cause to believe that the conditions of probation have been violated, it must impose a sentence based on the following schedule:

- a. For the first violation, 5 to 10 days in jail;
- b. For the second violation, 15 to 20 days in jail;
- c. For the third violation, 25 to 30 days in jail; and
- d. For the fourth violation, 90 days to 12 months in jail.

The court may not suspend any sentence in whole or in part and no sentence may be reduced by credits earned by being in jail awaiting the hearing.

After completing a sentence for a fourth violation of the conditions of supervision under SURE, an offender is placed back under regular probation supervision. Any subsequent

violation of a condition of probation would make the offender subject to having his or her probation revoked and the remainder of the sentence imposed.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** No. The introduced budget includes funding for this proposal.
7. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary. See Item 8.

Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2013	\$924,288	12	General
2014	\$924,288	12	General
2015	\$924,288	12	General
2016	\$924,288	12	General
2017	\$924,288	12	General
2018	\$924,288	12	General

8. Fiscal Implications:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) will be the agency most affected by the legislation. Offenders participating in SURE will be subject to more frequent drug testing, which will be an added cost. Also, probation and parole officers will be required to spend more time with SURE participants supervising them, ensure their quick arrest when conditions of probation are violated, and make more frequent court appearances. To handle the extra workload in the pilot sites, it is projected that DOC will need at least 12 additional probation and parole officers. The cost of these additional officers and the cost of additional drug testing are reflected in the fiscal impact shown in Item 7.

The required jail sentences for SURE participants who violate the terms of their probation may initially result in a noticeable increase in the number of persons held in jails. In addition to possibly causing crowding problems for some jails, this increase in jail inmates will have a fiscal impact on the state. A provision of the introduced budget bill directs the Compensation Board to reimburse jails \$12 per day per SURE inmate housed. Because the program has not been used in Virginia before, it is not known how many offenders will be assigned to the SURE program, or how many days they are likely to spend in jail as a consequence of violating conditions of their probation. Therefore, the potential increase in per diem payments to jails cannot be estimated. Experience with programs comparable to SURE in other jurisdictions has shown that, over time, the amount of time spent in jail by probation violators actually decreases.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:

Department of Corrections
Compensation Board
Local and regional jails
Circuit courts

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: None.

11. Other Comments: Identical to SB 111.

Date: 1/17/2012

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