

Department of Planning and Budget 2012 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB183

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

2. Patron: Stuart

3. Committee: Passed Both Houses

4. Title: Virginia Outdoors Foundation; among the select group of public bodies that are exempt from paying the fee for remote access to land records

5. Summary: This bill includes the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) among the group of public bodies that are exempt from paying the remote access fee that circuit court clerks are authorized to charge for remote access to land records. Currently, the Office of Attorney General, the Division of Debt Collection, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation are exempt from paying the fee.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

7. No Fiscal Impact.

8. Fiscal Implications: This bill would exempt VOF from having to pay fees charged by local circuit courts for remote access to land records. Chapter 434, 2011 Acts of Assembly, added the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to the Office of the Attorney General, Division of Debt Collection as the only public bodies exempt from being charged fees for remote access to land records.

Per § 10.1-1800 et.seq, Code of Virginia, VOF exists for the sole purpose of promoting the preservation of open-space land. Currently, VOF is responsible for about 15 percent of all conserved lands in the Commonwealth. As a course of duties related to promoting and overseeing the preservation of land, VOF researches deeds and other legal instruments to discover title and compliance issues that threaten permanent protection of open space. At present, VOF employs a combination of remote-access and in-person research methods in regards to land records. However, due to the high cost of sending VOF staff on in-person visits to local courthouses, the entity has increasingly relied on remote access to conduct research of land records.

According to VOF, this bill may save approximately \$3,800 annually if the entity is exempt from remote access fees charged by localities. The estimated cost savings is based on actual subscription prices from localities for calendar year 2011. VOF receives much of its annual budget as a transfer of general fund appropriation from the Department of Conservation and

Recreation (\$1,752,750 in FY 2012 per Item 352 C. of Chapter 890, the 2011 Appropriation Act).

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Department of Conservation and Recreation, circuit courts.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This bill would reduce the revenue to the localities' circuit court clerk offices by the amount saved by VOF annually.

Date: 3/5/2012