

## Department of Planning and Budget 2012 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** SB254

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

**2. Patron:** Reeves

**3. Committee:** Passed Both Houses

**4. Title:** Department of Veterans Services; personnel.

**5. Summary:** This bill provides that a ratio of claims agents with the Department of Veterans Services to the number of veterans in the Commonwealth shall be one agent for every 23,000 veterans.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** See #8.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Final.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** § 2.2-2002.1 of the Code of Virginia currently sets a ratio of one Department of Veterans Services (DVS) claims agent for every 26,212 veterans residing in the Commonwealth. There were 823,000 Virginia veterans as of September 30, 2010.

The number of claims filed by DVS on behalf of Virginia veterans continues to grow and DVS claims agents are struggling to keep pace with this growing demand. In FY 2005, DVS claims agents filed 18,550 claims; in FY 2011 the number of claims had grown to 26,431, a 42 percent increase. There are currently 32 claims agents in 20 offices across the Commonwealth.

Changing the ratio of claims agents to veterans to one for every 23,000 veterans will require an additional four claims agents, for a total of 36. Funding for these positions was included in the introduced budget and was maintained in the House's latest budget (House Bill 1301), as well as the Senate Finance Committee's proposed budget.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Department of Veterans Services.

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No.

**11. Other Comments:** This bill is a companion to HB1121.

**Date:** 3/6/12

**Document:** Janet Vogelgesang G:\12-14\FIS\SB254ER.doc

c: Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security