

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2018 General Assembly Session

Bill: HB14

Patron: Kory

Date: 1/23/2018

In accordance with the provisions of §30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced legislation:

Bill Summary:

Requires a public animal shelter to wait three days before euthanizing a dog or cat when a person has notified the shelter of his intent to adopt or take custody of the particular animal. The shelter must make reasonable efforts to accomplish the release of the dog or cat but is not required to hold the animal if it has reason to believe that the animal has seriously injured a human or the animal meets certain other specified conditions for euthanasia.

~~~~~

**Executive Summary:**

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.00 - \$230,000.00. Localities noted that the bill would impact components of their annual budget including wages, benefits, and operating cost because the bill requires additional staff for the extra work, and additional costs to hold the animal for additional days in the animal shelter. Localities also noted that the provision of the bill could lead to space constraints and create higher incidence of disease, which may lead to additional vet and treatment costs. Other localities noted that there would be no to little cost because they operate their animal shelter jointly with other localities or the cost would directly impact SPCA.

Please note this bill is identical to SB175.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Local Analysis:**

**Locality:** Botetourt County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$165,714.84

Botetourt County

The County is a member of a regional animal shelter facility, RCACP (Regional Center for Animal Care and Protection). Other locality members include Roanoke City, Roanoke County, and the Town of Vinton.

The average days in care for RCACP is 20 days; and additional 3 days of care equates to 23 days in care, or an increase of 15% (3 days / 20).

This increase would impact most components of the annual budget, including wages and certain benefits, and certain operating costs.

FY18 Annual Budget = \$1,380,957 x 80% of the budget impacted = \$1,104,766 x 15% = \$ 165,714.84.  
(Total impact for all localities; Botetourt County is allocated 14% of the costs)

Another calculation method would consider total animal intake of 3,600 animals x an extra 3 days = 10,800 days x \$18.00 per day (\$17.40 used statewide for dogs + a small increase to 2018) = \$ 194,400.

Yet another negative impact would be the limited capacity of the animal shelter in times of near or full capacity, operating as an open intake facility. The additional 3 days could potentially lead to space constraints and create the need to euthanize more animals as a result of the additional 3 days that would be required.

~~~~~  
Locality: City of Covington

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

The City of Covington and Alleghany County operate a joint animal shelter and I expect no impacts to the city contribution related to this.

~~~~~  
**Locality:** City of Norfolk

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$115,000.00

Average cost to house one animal one day is approximately \$27. Cost impact per shelter will vary. There are no limits to the number of animals these 3-day holds could be placed on, allowing the requesting parties to force shelters towards 90% save rates through overcrowding. Center would need to euthanize 1200 fewer animals to reach a 90% save rate. Placing individual 3-day holds on 1200 animals would incur 3600 additional care days and would cost a minimum of \$97,200. However, the resultant overcrowding will result in higher incidence of disease, leading to additional vet and treatment costs. Conservatively, it is estimated that overcrowding could raise average care costs to \$30 to \$32 per animal per day. This equates to a minimum fiscal impact of \$108,000 to \$115,000 annually.

~~~~~  
Locality: City of Roanoke

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$230,000.00

Animals are held for ten days. If animals were held were an extra three days there would be impact to the City.

Locality: City of Winchester

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

I spoke with my ACOs on this. There would be no financial impact to the City because it would only direct affect the SPCA. However, they are opposed to the bill and feel there would be an undue burden placed on the SPCA if a coordinated effort was made by animal rescue advocates who could keep calling every three days to keep an animal from being euthanized.

Locality: County of Henrico

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$75,000.00

This bill would require:

- One additional full time staff member to manage the additional time and paperwork that would come from citizens showing interest in adoption- \$50,000
- Holding the animals longer will cause an increase in the amount of vet care- \$15,000
- Longer holding times will increase the amount spent on food, water, and cleaning- \$5,000
- Increased time that all staff would have to spend caring for the animals- \$5,000

Total: \$75,000

Locality: Fairfax County

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$45,000.00

As a result of holding euthanized pets for an additional three days, the fiscal impact to the County is estimated at \$5,000-\$6,500 annually for boarding, staff, and food, and while it is not possible to precisely calculate the additional cost for any medications or vet care, those items could easily be an additional \$30-\$50,000 annually. In Fairfax, before a euthanasia decision is made, the Animal Shelter explores all other reasonable options including placement with rescue, if the pet is safe to place. A significant portion of euthanasias are either owner requested end of life or vet recommended for medical, suffering, or quality of life.

Locality: Rockingham County

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

No impact on Rockingham County but this will impact the local SPCA.

Locality: Spotsylvania County

Estimated Fiscal Impact: \$0.00

No additional cost.

Professional Organization Analysis:

Organization: Northern Neck PDC

Minimal fiscal impact to localities.