

Department of Planning and Budget 2019 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB1885

House of Origin ☒ Introduced ☐ Substitute ☐ Engrossed
Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. **Patron:** Bell, Richard P.

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

4. **Title:** Department of Health and Board of Health; mitigating the risks of radon.

5. **Summary:** Directs the Department of Health to develop programs to educate the public about and increase public awareness of radon, sources of radon, potential adverse health impacts of radon exposure, and options for testing for and mitigating the presence of radon and to provide guidance on selecting qualified radon testing or mitigation professionals. The bill also directs the Board of Health to establish a program for the regulation of radon testing or mitigation professionals, including requirements for (i) certification of radon testing or mitigation professionals and (ii) radon testing and mitigation protocols.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes.

7. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary, see item #8.

7a. Expenditure Impact:

| <i>Fiscal Year</i> | <i>Dollars</i> | <i>Positions</i> | <i>Fund</i> |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| 2019 | 0 | | |
| 2020 | \$1,280,230 | 5 | General |
| 2021 | \$668,225 | 5 | General |
| 2022 | \$668,225 | 5 | General |
| 2023 | \$668,225 | 5 | General |
| 2024 | \$668,225 | 5 | General |
| 2025 | \$668,225 | 5 | General |

8. **Fiscal Implications:** This bill would have a fiscal impact on the Commonwealth. The Office of Radiological Health does not currently have a program to regulate or certify radon professionals and does not have the resources available. VDH anticipates that a program to regulate and certify radon professionals as well as establish radon testing and mitigation protocols would require five new positions. Three radon compliance specialists would be needed to review and approve the applications and credentials of radon professionals conducting business in the Commonwealth, to maintain and track this information in a database, provide technical advice and assistance to the public, to answer calls and give presentations to increase radon awareness, and develop requirements for the certification of these professionals and radon testing and mitigation protocols, which would incorporate the

federal EPA radon standards into Virginia regulation. Each radon compliance specialist, including salary and fringe benefits, would cost \$95,000 per year for a total of \$285,000 annually. Based on data from the Office of Radiological Health's X-Ray Program, there would be approximately 500 professionals that would need to be certified and regulated under this new program. Currently, each x-ray certification professional can certify approximately 150-160 professionals annually. Therefore three positions would be necessary to certify the estimated 500 radon professionals, as well as perform the other duties provided in the bill. This estimate assumes annual certification and recertification.

A supervisor would also be required to lead, train, and evaluate the radon program staff. This position would also be responsible for ensuring registration, certification, inspection and tagging fees are properly collected, would monitor staff's activities to ensure compliance with EPA requirements. The supervisor would also ensure that staff participate in nuclear power plant exercises in support of the overall Radiation Control Program. While the Office of Radiological Health currently has other supervisors, a supervisor for these programs is necessary because of the expertise required. The office's current supervisors are also in the field doing other program related inspections as well as their supervising duties and could not absorb these additional duties. A supervisor position including salary and fringe benefits would cost \$115,000 per year.

An office support specialist would be needed for billing and collections, as well as financial reporting for payment of radon professionals' applications, certifications, inspections, and enforcement fees. This position would also provide administrative support (creating and maintaining lists and files; preparing correspondence and reports; update database).

Since VDH does not currently regulate or certify radon professionals a database would need to be created to meet the requirements of the program. VDH would need \$612,005 the first year to develop a database and \$50,000 annually thereafter for database maintenance and support. Of the first year amount, \$150,000 would be used to assess database application requirements to meet the program's needs. The remaining \$512,005 would be used to develop or purchase a database for the tracking of radon professionals and credentials, billing of fees and inspections, report creation and generation.

The bill also directs VDH to develop programs to educate the public about and increase public awareness of radon, sources of radon, potential adverse health impacts of radon exposure, and options for testing for and mitigating the presence of radon and to provide guidance on selecting qualified radon testing or mitigation professionals. Radon compliance specialists would also travel to educate the public and increase awareness by speaking at classes and special events. The amount of travel will depend on the number of requests received. VDH estimates an average of 25 trips per year based on similar awareness effort data, which would amount to \$21,285 a year in travel costs. These trips would also include attending the annual National Radon Symposium and the Region 3 radon stakeholder's meeting.

The department would also organize advertising campaigns to promote radon testing in high or moderate risk areas by utilizing print ads, digital ads, and radio or television public service announcements. The education program would also hand out education items, brochures, and maps, as well as distribute radon test kits at public events. These educational and advertising efforts would cost \$110,000 per year.

The programs would also need \$21,940 per year for VITA charges, office space, and general office supplies.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.