

## **Department of Planning and Budget**

### **2020 Fiscal Impact Statement**

**1. Bill Number:** SB310

<b>House of Origin</b>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Stanley

**3. Committee:** Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

**4. Title:** Public animal shelters; notice to euthanize.

**5. 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 animal. The shelter must make reasonable efforts to accomplish the release of the animal but is not required 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.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** No. See item 8.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** This bill will increase responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), including enforcing the provisions and providing guidance to shelters to achieve compliance. HB/SB30, as introduced by the Governor, includes \$94,533 in each year for a Senior Animal Inspector to address the increased workload with animal shelter inspections and ensure adequate animal care coverage. With this position in the enacted budget, VDACS will be able to absorb the additional responsibility outlined in the proposed legislation. Currently, VDACS is unable to absorb any additional responsibilities in this program.

According to VDACS, 80,040 dogs and cats entered Virginia's public animal shelters as strays in 2018. Routine animal shelter inspections will require an increase in paperwork auditing to ensure all animals were held for appropriate lengths of time and all euthanized animals were in compliance with this bill. The complex nature of animal holding times at shelters may generate an increase in complaints received by VDACS. Complaints may require multiple days to investigate and may result in civil penalties, which take significantly more time to process.

This bill may have an expenditure impact on localities, as shelters will be required to house, feed, water, and provide veterinary care for animals for longer hold times. A survey completed by animal control agencies in 48 localities as part of the 2016 Companion Animal Licensing Working Group study found that the average number of days an animal remained in the shelter was 18.6. In the same study, the average cost to the locality for one dog to stay in the shelter for one night was \$17.40.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; localities

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

**11. Other Comments:** None.