

## Department of Planning and Budget 2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** SB605

**House of Origin**     Introduced     Substitute     Engrossed  
**Second House**     In Committee     Substitute     Enrolled

**2. Patron:** Chase

**3. Committee:** Privileges and Elections

**4. Title:** Elections; conduct of election; election results; post-election forensic audits.

**5. Summary:** Provides for the conduct of a forensic audit of an election in a county or city upon the request of certain officials or upon the petition of a group of residents of the locality in question. The purpose of an audit is to determine the accuracy and legality of the election in question. The bill provides that an audit includes a review of all materials, equipment, and procedures used during any part of the election, including ballots, pollbooks, voting machines, and routers. The bill requires that the audit be open to the public and states that the auditing process may include participation by residents. The results of the audit are to be presented to a jury of local residents who have the power to declare the election valid or invalid. The bill also gives the State Inspector General the power and duty to conduct an audit of the 2020 general election and requires him to produce a report of his findings.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes; see Item 8.

**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary; see Item 8.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** As stand-alone legislation, the Department of Elections considers implementation of this bill as “routine,” and does not require additional funding.

The Office of the State Inspector General is currently investigating the cost to perform an audit of this magnitude. A budget amendment is expected to be needed, however, an estimate is not currently available.

Any potential impact to the courts is unknown at this time.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Office of the State Inspector General, Virginia Department of Elections, State Board of Elections, Circuit Courts, and localities (General Registrars and Electoral Boards).

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

**11. Other Comments:** None.

Date: 1/25/2022

