

## Department of Planning and Budget 2023 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB1721

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

**2. Patron:** Clark**3. Committee:** Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources**4. Title:** Commissioner of Health; work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth.

**5. Summary:** Directs the Commissioner of Health to convene a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth's public drinking water. The bill requires the work group to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Committees on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources and Health, Welfare and Institutions and the Senate Committees on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources and Education and Health by December 1, 2023.

This FIS has been revised to include additional information.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, item 296.**7. Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary, see item #8.

**8. Fiscal Implications:** The provisions of this legislation would have a fiscal impact on the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to convene a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in the Commonwealth's public drinking water. The bill requires the work group to evaluate existing approaches to reducing microplastics in drinking water, including regulatory approaches adopted by other states and the federal government. VDH does not have the resources to provide the administrative and technical support (coordinate, facilitate, and gather appropriate experts regarding microplastics) required of this legislation and would need to hire a qualified contractor. VDH estimates a contractor would charge \$96,000 to provide administrative and technical support, including the cost to complete a report (\$150/hour x 40 hours/week for 16 weeks). Additionally, VDH asserts that to have a meaningful evaluation of existing approaches adopted by other states, a comprehensive review of scientific studies and regulatory approaches would be necessary. VDH estimates the contractor would charge \$18,000 to complete the comprehensive review of existing approaches to reduce microplastics in drinking water (\$150/hour x 40/week for 3 weeks).

There is no sampling data on microplastics in the Commonwealth's drinking water, including possible sources of such contamination. Additionally, since microplastics is an unregulated contaminant, a sampling study would be necessary to determine current levels of microplastics in the Commonwealth's public drinking water, including possible sources for microplastics to enter drinking water. There are about 2,860 waterworks in Virginia. The bill does not specify a specific amount of sampling to perform. However, VDH assumes the workgroup and contractor would need at least 1,000 samples to have statistically significant data of the concentration of microplastics in drinking water and the associated sources of microplastics.

In September 2022, California became the first state to require microplastic testing in drinking water sources. California's standardized methods for sampling and testing microplastics cost an estimated \$1,000 to \$2,000 per sample. Based on an estimated 1,000 samples with a cost of \$1,000 to \$2,000 per sample, sampling and laboratory costs would range between \$1 million to \$2 million. This amount is scalable based on the amount of sampling required.

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

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

**11. Other Comments:** None.