

Department of Planning and Budget

2023 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB1122

House of Origin ☐ Introduced ☒ Substitute ☐ Engrossed

Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. Patron: Hanger

3. Committee: Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

4. Title: Open-space lands preservation trust fund; use of funds; conservation easements.

5. Summary: Allows localities receive grants from the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund (Fund) to provide funding for projects approved by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to persons conveying conservation easements to nonprofit land trusts so long as such easement has a local coholder, provided that if such property interest is not compliant with the Open-Space Land Act, such person is accredited by the Land Trust Alliance at the time of the grant award. The bill provides that if such accreditation is not available at the time of the grant application, the Virginia Outdoor Foundation (Foundation) must evaluate such holder on a case-by-case basis. "Local coholder" means the governing body of the locality in which the easement is located, a public recreational facilities authority, any other local entity authorized by statute to hold open-space easements, or a soil and water conservation district, if authorized to hold an easement under the Open-Space Land Act. Under current law the Fund is only available to persons that convey a property interest to the Foundation and localities.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary.

8. Fiscal Implications: This bill expands the eligibility criteria to receive grant awards from the Open Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund. It is anticipated that this bill will not have a fiscal impact on the Department of Conservation and Recreation or the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Awards from the Open-Space Lands Preservation Trust Fund are subject to appropriation.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Conservation and Recreation; Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.