

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB579

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Simonds

3. Committee: Committee Referral Pending

4. Title: Virginia Freedom of Information Act; records of federal animal welfare violations; limitation.

5. Summary: Prohibits any public body in custody of records that pertain to or were generated as a result of a violation of federal animal welfare regulations, policies, or guidelines from charging more than \$25 for the production of such records regarding any one incident or one animal testing facility.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Preliminary, see Item 8.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary, see Item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: The provisions of this bill could potentially create an indeterminate impact to state agencies and other public bodies covered by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. The exact impact, if any, to a specific state agency or other public body will depend on the current policies implemented by such agencies or bodies to recover the costs associated with accessing and searching for records as part of responding to requests for information. To the extent that the provisions of this bill are in line with an agency's or public body's current practices, no negative impact is expected for that agency or body. To the extent that an agency's or other public body's current policies allow for a higher charge than that outlined in this bill, they may experience a fiscal impact in the form of a reduction in the amount charged to requesting parties. This bill is most likely to impact higher education institutions who perform animal research, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). The State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) has indicated that public higher education institutions may experience a fiscal impact from this legislation due to the fee cap leaving universities with the costs to manage requests. VDACS has stated this bill will not create a fiscal impact for them.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: State public bodies in custody of records pertaining to violations of federal animal welfare regulations, higher education institutions, VDACS.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: None