

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB1121

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

2. **Patron:** Carr

3. **Committee:** Public Safety

4. **Title:** Department of Corrections; online educational courses.

5. **Summary:** This bill requires the Director of the Department of Corrections to establish, develop, and implement an educational program with the Online Virginia Network Authority to provide a means for prisoners to earn degrees and postsecondary education credentials through online degree and credential programs that are offered by George Mason University, Old Dominion University, James Madison University, and comprehensive community colleges.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 390

7. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary. See Item 8 below.

8. **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Corrections (DOC) reports that it has the infrastructure to provide access to certain online services in a highly controlled and secure environment. However, the current bandwidth does not support any additional services like the online programs required by the bill. DOC estimates the annual cost to upgrade the network bandwidth at \$29,744 per site where the courses are offered. If the courses are offered at all of DOC's 42 correctional facilities, the total cost would be approximately \$1.2 million from the general fund each fiscal year.

HB/SB30 eliminates the Online Virginia Network Authority (OVNA) appropriation of \$4.0 million general fund each year, which will require the partner institutions to support existing online programming with institutional funds. The partner institutions anticipate an additional cost to expand services to meet needs of the incarcerated individuals in DOC facilities. The actual impact on the affected institutions of higher education is not known at this time. If additional information becomes available, this statement will be revised.

9. **Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Department of Corrections, Online Virginia Network Authority, George Mason University, Old Dominion University, James Madison University, community colleges

10. **Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

11. **Other Comments:** None