

# Commission on Local Government

## Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2022 General Assembly Session

**Bill:** HB 12

**Special Session:**

**Patron:** Anderson

**Date:** 1/11/2022

In accordance with the provisions of §30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced legislation:

### Bill Summary:

Public school buildings; entry points; limits; screening. Requires each local school board to (i) limit to the lowest feasible number the entry points in each public school building in the local school division, (ii) ensure that each individual who seeks to enter any school building in the local school division is screened with a handheld metal detector wand by a school security officer or another appropriate school board employee who is appropriately trained in such method of screening, (iii) require each such school security officer or other appropriate school board employee to implement further screening according to a protocol that it deems appropriate in any case in which the school board employee who conducts the initial screening has reason to believe that the individual who seeks to enter the school building is in possession of a weapon, and (iv) prohibit any individual from entering any school building in the local school division if the individual fails or refuses to submit to the screening required in clauses (ii) and (iii).

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### Executive Summary:

Localities have evaluated a negative fiscal impact ranging from \$0.5 - \$4.36 million. A majority of the localities who responded indicate that this bill would present a significant fiscal burden in terms of both dollar totals and administrative burden. One locality provided an estimated cost of approximately \$500,000 per facility, while another indicated implementing the bill's provisions would consume 4.5% of their real estate tax revenue.

Most localities noted that the costs of acquiring sufficient wands or to check all students, faculty, and other visitors who may enter would present a significant fiscal impact. Moreover, most localities stated that the costs associated with hiring the appropriate personnel (school resources officers - SROs) would be a major cost burden; many localities would need to hire multiple SROs to carry out the assigned screening on their student populations. Although not estimated, these localities also noted that the bill requirements would present a major disruption to school bus and bell schedules, which presents an unknown negative fiscal impact. One locality mentioned the need for a feasibility study to examine the need for minimal entry points in order to comply with the bill.

The precise impacts scale with the size of the school division; localities with more students report greater fiscal impacts than localities with fewer. The proposed legislation impacts cities and counties only, as schools are not a function of towns.

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### Local Analysis:

**Locality:** City of Harrisonburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$1,000,000.00

We would need to hire additional resource officers as well as other school staff to screen every person including students, teachers/staff, parents, and other community members at all times before, during, and after school as well as for school sponsored activities. I estimate that it would cost over \$1 million dollars for HCPS to hire staff and purchase the necessary equipment to carry out such legislation.

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**Locality:** City of Manassas

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$705,000.00

The true impact of this bill would be the need to hire a school resource officer for every school to perform these screenings. Although the legislation states school security officer or "another appropriate school board employee," we cannot have non-armed/non-law enforcement personnel perform this function. If the intent is to prevent weapons from entering the school, we must have the appropriate type of personnel in place to ensure this is happening. The City of Manassas would have to hire an additional five school resource officers in order to have one stationed at each school to perform this function. The cost to hire, train, and equip a single school resource officer is \$140,000. Five officers would be \$700,000. The cost to have a sufficient number of handheld wands at each school would be an additional \$5,000, for a total fiscal impact of \$705,000.

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**Locality:** City of Roanoke

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$4,636,000.00

This is an estimate of the costs Roanoke City Public Schools would expect to incur on an annual basis to implement this bill's requirements at all schools. 10 school security officers (SSOs) 2 hrs/day and 6 full time (FT) SSOs at both high schools; plus an estimated 800 hrs of after-school activity coverage by 6 SSOs at each high school x 2 high schools. 3 SSOs 2 hrs/day and 2 FT SSOs at each of the 5 middle schools; plus an estimated 640 hours of after-school activity coverage by 3 SSOs per school. 3 SSOs 2 hrs/day and 1 FT SSO at each of 17 elementary schools; plus an estimated 200 hrs x 2 SSOs for after-school activity coverage per school. One SSO 2 hrs/day and 1 FT SSO, plus 200 hrs of after-school activity coverage by 2 SSOs at 4 program sites (incl. alternative education and CTE). Pay estimated at \$25/hr + benefits. Total annual personnel costs for all schools estimated at \$4.619 million, plus approximately \$17,500 for training, equipment and supplies for this staff and process.

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**Locality:** City of Winchester

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$2,500.00

This would be time consuming and personnel requirements make this a hurdle. Walk thru metal detectors save on the personnel but would cost up to \$35,000 for all of our schools. If we needed to hire a security guard for each door to "wand detect" each person that could be upwards of \$250,000 in labor costs each year. (SRO assignments exist but are not always available - we get many visitors each day)

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**Locality:** County of Bland

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$120,000.00

Currently, Bland County Public Schools operates one elementary and one high school on separate campuses. Both campuses have multiple buildings in which education is provided. The County provides a school resource officer a both campuses. Both campuses utilize cameras and electronic locks to control entrance to the buildings. Items (i) and (iv) of the bill do not create substantial costs to implement, as they already are being implemented. However, item (ii) would require the hiring of additional school resource officers. In order to screen with a handheld metal detector everyone entering the buildings, at least two more SROs would be needed. Thus, bringing the total number to four, up from two.

With a base salary of \$35,000 plus benefits of approximately \$20,000, the addition of four new SROs would cost approximately \$110,000 annually. When expenses for uniforms, training, equipment, etc. are added, approximately \$5,000 per employee annually, the potential annual total cost could be approximately \$120,000.

The challenge to small rural localities, such as Bland County that have limited amount of tax base, is that the anticipated cost is the equitant to approximately 4.5% of the County's real estate tax revenue.

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**Locality:** Fairfax County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$1.00

Costs: Difficult to fully quantify but likely very substantial (up to \$500,000 per facility).

The costs associated with procuring metal detection devices, the personnel required to staff such devices, and appropriate staff training are difficult to fully quantify without further details. Total costs could be as high as \$500,000 per facility, depending on equipment purchased, school size, and student enrollment (Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) currently has 198 schools and centers, serving over 178,000 students and 23,000 school-based employees daily). In addition, such a requirement could create operational impacts which could affect both bus and bell schedules in order to accommodate the additional time it would take to screen every entrant at each facility at the beginning of each school day.

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**Locality:** Henrico County.

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$148,000.00

Included in the estimate is the purchase of 10 wand detectors per school for 74 schools. This does not include any assumption of new staff to utilize them, which may be required.

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**Locality:** Norfolk

The cost of the of minimizing entry points would be approximately about \$100,000 for an engineering study on the building code feasibility, then for materials and labor to enact. The approximate cost for wand detecting by school security officers could be as high as \$400,000 annually for materials, supplies, salaries of the officers, and ancillary cost. Total approximate cost for the bill as submitted is \$500,000.

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**Locality:** Rockingham County

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$500,000.00

We already limit where people can enter the building.

We only have SROs at high schools. There are 22 elementary and middle schools without SRO's. 11,700 students go through our building each day. It would take numerous people to "wand" students coming in in the morning to not disrupt school hours. How many people do you need to get 1000 kids in the door timely??

We would need to purchase numerous detectors that people walkthrough each morning and hire staff to man those detectors and physically search the outliers.

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**Locality:** Town of Chincoteague, Inc

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The bill will have no fiscal impact to the Town of Chincoteague as we do not directly fund County Schools. The proposed bill is appropriate and should be able to be accomplished with existing school board personnel.

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**Locality:** Town of Leesburg

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

The Town does not have schools. It is a County function so this does not apply to Leesburg.

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**Locality:** Town of Marion.

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** \$0.00

Schools re functions of the county, not town, so no fiscal impact on town budget

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### **Professional and Other Organization**

#### **Analysis:**

**Organization:** Northern Neck PDC

Already school security measures are in place to limit access and screen entrants to school buildings. This law would have limited to no fiscal impact on localities.

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