

# Department of Planning and Budget 2003 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number: SB1151**

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

**2. Patron: Stolle**

**3. Committee: House of Courts of Justice**

**4. Title: Abandonment of infants**

**5. Summary/Purpose:**

Currently, there are several statutes that address abuse and neglect of children. The proposed bill would exempt from prosecution under these provisions parents who, within the first two weeks of a child's life, leave a child at a hospital that provides 24-hour emergency services or a rescue squad or fire station that employs emergency medical technicians.

The bill would make it a Class I misdemeanor for any woman who gives birth to a child without a health care professional in attendance to fail to report, within two weeks of the event, the birth, whether a live birth or stillbirth, to the health department or a law enforcement agency. If the birth were a stillbirth or the child died prior to the birth being reported, it would be a Class 6 felony to take any action to conceal the birth or to conceal the identity of the parent.

Finally, the bill would authorize local departments of social services to take custody of abandoned children, to arrange for placement of such children, and to institute proceedings for the termination of parental rights.

**6. Fiscal Impact: See Item No. 8.**

**7. Budget amendment necessary: None.**

**8. Fiscal implications:**

Due to the lack of data, the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission has determined, pursuant to § 19.1-4 of the Code of Virginia, that the impact of the proposed legislation on state-responsible (prison) bed space cannot be determined. However, it is expected that the impact will be negligible.

**9. Specific agency or political subdivisions affected:**

Department of Corrections  
Department of Social Services

10. **Technical amendment necessary:** None.

11. **Other comments:** None.

**Date:** 02/14/03/rwh

**Document:** G:\LEGIS\Fis-03\Sb1151s1.Doc DickHall -Sizemore

cc:SecretaryofPublicSafety