

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sHB-6485

AN ACT CONCERNING NATURAL ORGANIC REDUCTION.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Cost	198,175	234,718
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	68,143	98,428
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Loss	less than 375,00	less than 375,00

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to develop and provide authorization forms for evidence of the identity of deceased persons to allow the agency to issue permits for the natural organic reduction of bodies, develop regulations for the safe disposal of any incidental or foreign material found during the reduction process, develop and implement natural organic reduction facility ("facility") site review, and establish a certification program for facility employees. It results in an anticipated cost to DPH of \$198,175 in FY 24 and \$234,718 in FY 25, a cost to the Office of the State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits of \$68,143 in FY 24 and \$98,428 in FY 25, and a revenue loss of less than \$375,000 in both fiscal years. FY 24 costs are for a partial fiscal year, as the bill is effective 10/1/23. FY 25 costs are annualized.

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 42.82% of payroll in FY 24.

DPH costs include three full-time positions, an Environmental Analyst 3, an Environmental Analyst 1, and a Health Program Associate (HPA)², as well as costs associated other expenses, including modification of the Electronic Death Registry System. The Office of the State Comptroller – Fringe Benefits costs support these three positions.

The cost to modify the Electronic Death Registry System is projected to cost \$25,000 in FY 24 only. The cost for equipment and general office supplies is estimated at \$14,038 in FY 24 and \$4,852 in FY 25. It is anticipated that approximately 2,500 bodies will be naturally organically reduced in each fiscal year.

The General Fund revenue loss of less than \$375,000 in both FY 24 and FY 25 is associated with a decrease in the number of cremation certificates issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, under the assumption that bodies that would have been cremated in the past may be naturally organically reduced instead. There is currently a \$150 fee for a cremation certificate.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of bodies that are naturally organically reduced, instead of cremated.

²The salaries of the three positions are: \$58,928 in FY 24 and \$85,118 in FY 25 for the Environmental Analyst 3, \$44,764 in FY 24 and \$64,658 in FY 25 for the Environmental Analyst 1, and \$55,446 in FY 24 and \$80,089 in FY 25 for the Health Program Associate. FY 24 costs are for a partial year, as the bill is effective 10/1/23 while FY 25 costs are annualized.