

Department of Planning and Budget 2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB522

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: Lucas

3. Committee: Finance and Appropriations

4. Title: Toll Relief Program; eligibility.

5. Summary: Requires the Department of Transportation to expand eligibility for the Toll Relief Program for the tolls on the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels to residents of the Cities of Portsmouth and Norfolk with an income of \$45,000 or less per year. The bill requires that all eligible residents receive the same toll relief regardless of income level. The bill provides that funding for the additional toll relief shall be paid by the Commonwealth from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), as possible, and any costs not covered by the ARPA shall be the responsibility of the Commonwealth. The bill expires on January 1, 2025.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes. Item 455 to appropriate any ARPA or state funding directed towards this program.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary; See item 8 below.

8. Fiscal Implications: The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) administers the existing Toll Relief Program. Funds for the current program are provided by Elizabeth River Crossings, a private entity that operates and maintains the Elizabeth River Tunnels under an agreement with VDOT. The current income limit for toll relief is \$30,000. The total number of individuals who would be eligible for the temporarily expanded toll relief program, and the driving habits of those individuals, is unknown. As a result, the full cost of providing toll relief to those individuals is indeterminate.

The bill does not specify a specific source of funds included in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to be used for a toll relief program. Several transportation-specific sources of funds are included in the ARPA; however, it is not clear if use of funds in the manner proposed by the bill is considered an eligible use of funds under any of those sources. The ARPA additionally includes the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF), which allows for use of funds to address a broad range of health and economic impacts related to COVID-19. The CSLFRF allows for funds to be used to address economic impacts to low and moderate income households or communities. It is possible that a toll relief program would be eligible; however, additional analysis is needed to make a full determination of eligibility.

The bill provides that any funds not covered by ARPA to be the responsibility of the Commonwealth. This would require funding to be provided for this purpose in the Appropriation Act, either from the general fund or other transportation funds.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Virginia Department of Transportation

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This bill is identical to HB567.