



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 996

PRINTERS NO. 1617

PRIME SPONSOR: Davanzo

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22
General Fund	\$0	\$0

SUMMARY: House Bill 996, Printer's Number 1617, establishes the free-standing Religious Liberty in Long-Term Care Facilities Act to allow visitation to long-term care facilities by members of the clergy during a declaration of disaster emergency. This legislation is effective in 60 days.

ANALYSIS: HB 996 requires the Department of Health (DOH), in consultation with the Department of Human Services, to establish protocols to allow a resident of a long-term care facility to receive visitation by a member of the clergy during a disaster emergency. The protocols must include safety measures for members of the clergy and must establish a duration of no more than 45 days when a facility may exclude members of the clergy for the purpose of establishing safety measures for residents and clergy members. DOH may update the protocols during the disaster emergency.

A long-term care facility may establish additional safety requirements regarding visitation by clergy to protect residents so long as the requirements are directly linked to the disaster emergency and do not have the effect of substantially preventing a member of the clergy from visiting. A facility may require a member of the clergy to provide their own personal protective equipment or assume the cost of equipment provided by the facility. A facility may suspend visitation by a member of the clergy who violates the protocols established by DOH.

This legislation applies within 15 days of a declaration of disaster emergency and ceases to apply 60 days after the emergency declaration expires.

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of this legislation should have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

PREPARED BY: Nick McClure
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: May 25, 2021

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.