



Economic Impact Analysis Virginia Department of Planning and Budget

18 VAC 70-20 – Virginia Board for Geology Regulations
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
November 1, 2011

Summary of the Proposed Amendments to Regulation

The Board for Geology (Board) proposes to create a Geologist-in-Training (GIT) designation.

Result of Analysis

The benefits likely exceed the costs for all proposed changes.

Estimated Economic Impact

§ 54.1-1401 of the Code of Virginia states, in part, that “The certification program set forth in this chapter is voluntary and shall not be construed to prevent or affect the practice of geology by uncertified geologists; however, no person may represent himself as a Virginia certified professional geologist unless he has been so certified by the Board.” Thus, professional geologist certification is essentially title protection and is not required in order to legally work as a geologist.

The current and proposed regulations specify the qualifications required for certification as a professional geologist. The qualifications include the completion of extensive education and experience requirements, as well as passing a Board-approved examination. The Board proposes to create a Geologist-in-Training (GIT) designation which would have similar education requirements to the professional geologist certification, but would not require geological work experience

The current regulations do not specify that applicants must complete geological work experience prior to sitting for the Board-approved exam. In practice though, it appears that the Board does not permit applicants to take the exam until work experience is completed. In the

agency background document for this proposed action the Department of Professional and Occupation Regulation (Department) states the following:

Currently, several colleges and universities, in other states, require students graduating with degrees in geology to take the ... exam as part of their degree program. The Board believes that allowing individuals to take the ... exam shortly after completion of course work rather than years after completion of course work may result in a higher pass rate. By allowing qualified college students and more recent college graduates to sit for the ... exam, and for college graduates who have passed the ... exam to earn the designation of GIT, the Board believes there will be an increase in the number individuals who pass the ... exam, and subsequently, meet all of the qualifications to become Certified Virginia Professional Geologists.

Whether or not new language is necessary in order to allow qualified college students and more recent college graduates to sit for the exam, there appears to be no disadvantage to the public for allowing these individuals to sit for the exam.

Businesses and Entities Affected

The Department expects approximately 60 applicants for the Geologist-in-Training designation annually.

Localities Particularly Affected

The proposed regulations do not disproportionately affect particular localities.

Projected Impact on Employment

The proposal amendments are unlikely to significantly affect total employment.

Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property

The proposed amendments are unlikely to significantly affect the use and value of private property.

Small Businesses: Costs and Other Effects

The proposed amendments are unlikely to significantly affect small businesses.

Small Businesses: Alternative Method that Minimizes Adverse Impact

The proposed amendments are unlikely to significantly affect small businesses.

Real Estate Development Costs

The proposed amendments are unlikely to significantly affect real estate development costs.

Legal Mandate

The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with Section 2.2-4007.04 of the Administrative Process Act and Executive Order Number 14 (10). Section 2.2-4007.04 requires that such economic impact analyses include, but need not be limited to, the projected number of businesses or other entities to whom the regulation would apply, the identity of any localities and types of businesses or other entities particularly affected, the projected number of persons and employment positions to be affected, the projected costs to affected businesses or entities to implement or comply with the regulation, and the impact on the use and value of private property. Further, if the proposed regulation has adverse effect on small businesses, Section 2.2-4007.04 requires that such economic impact analyses include (i) an identification and estimate of the number of small businesses subject to the regulation; (ii) the projected reporting, recordkeeping, and other administrative costs required for small businesses to comply with the regulation, including the type of professional skills necessary for preparing required reports and other documents; (iii) a statement of the probable effect of the regulation on affected small businesses; and (iv) a description of any less intrusive or less costly alternative methods of achieving the purpose of the regulation. The analysis presented above represents DPB's best estimate of these economic impacts.