



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE  
**Joint Fiscal Office**

1 Baldwin Street • Montpelier, VT 05633-5701 • (802) 828-2295 • <https://jfo.vermont.gov>

## Fiscal Note

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Ezra Holben, Fiscal Analyst

### **H.542 – An act relating to terminating testing of schools in Vermont for polychlorinated biphenyls**

As passed by the House of Representatives<sup>1i</sup>

#### **Bill Summary**

This bill would end ongoing air quality testing performed by the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) in both public and approved, recognized independent schools built before 1980 for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). If ANR previously tested for PCBs in a public or approved, recognized independent school and PCBs were found at a level that requires continued testing, this bill would require the State to fund ongoing PCB testing at the school. This bill is effective upon passage.

#### **Fiscal Impact**

This bill would terminate ongoing ANR testing for PCBs and would require the State to pay the costs of investigation, remediation, and removal of PCBs at schools that ANR tested and found positive for PCBs.

There is no appropriation included in this bill. Further, absent an appropriation for testing, this bill would not alter estimated expenditures for fiscal year 2027. However, the bill would require ongoing State funding for the investigation, remediation, and removal of PCBs at schools that tested positive for the presence of PCBs at actionable levels. Because the bill does not include a funding source, nor an appropriation for this purpose, it is unclear how this requirement would be funded.

#### **Reports**

Under this bill the Secretary of Natural Resources would be required to submit a report to the House Committees on Education, on Environment, and on Appropriations, as well as the Senate Committees on Education, on Natural Resources and Energy, and on Appropriations by January 15, 2027. This report would include a long-term remediation plan for PCB contamination in public and approved, recognized independent schools in Vermont.

Additionally, the Commissioner of Health would provide an updated assessment of the health impacts of PCBs in the State's public and approved, recognized independent schools. This assessment would be due by January 15, 2027, and submitted to the House Committees on Education, on Environment, and on Appropriations, as well as the Senate Committees on Education, on Natural Resources and Energy, and on Appropriations.

<sup>1</sup> *The Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) is a nonpartisan legislative office dedicated to producing unbiased fiscal analysis – this fiscal note is meant to provide information for legislative consideration, not to provide policy recommendations.*

The Secretary would also be required to submit to the aforementioned committees an annual report, beginning January 15, 2027, on ANR's PCB testing in public schools and approved, recognized independent schools. This report would include:

- the amount of State funds expended on the testing, investigation, removal, and remediation of PCBs;
- the remaining funds at ANR or the Agency of Education (AOE) for testing or for grants for schools to perform investigation, removal, and remediation of PCBs; and
- an estimate of the additional funds necessary to complete the investigation, removal, and remediation of PCBs at schools that tested above State school action levels.

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<sup>i</sup> *The full fiscal note history is available on the fiscal tab of the bill page on the General Assembly website and can be pulled up through a bill number search on the JFO page.*