



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

WWW.RFA.SC.GOV • (803)734-3793

This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number: H. 3047 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Litter, Balloons
Requestor: House Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s): Welsh
Impact Date: April 6, 2026

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill creates the misdemeanor offense of intentionally releasing balloons filled with lighter than air gas. Violations are punished pursuant to Section 16-11-700 regarding penalties for the dumping of litter.

Judicial anticipates this bill may result in an increase in the number of cases in local courts, which may increase the workload of the court system and downstream expenses such as court interpreting. The potential increase will depend on the number of people who are currently engaging in conduct that will now be deemed contrary to the law and how vigorously the law will be enforced. Judicial anticipates the increased expenses can be initially managed within existing appropriations. However, Judicial indicated that if the increase in the caseload and corresponding downstream expenses is significant, it will request additional General Fund appropriations.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) contacted all counties in the state and the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) to determine the potential expenditure impact this bill may have for local governments. We received a response from Charleston County, Florence County, Lancaster County, and MASC. Charleston, Florence, and Lancaster Counties indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. Additionally, MASC notes that municipalities may also incur costs related to law enforcement training.

This bill may result in an increase in the number of local court cases and potentially the number of incarcerations, which may increase the workload of the court system and local jails. The newly created misdemeanor is punished pursuant to section 16-11-700 which categorizes offenses by the weight of litter. Violations of not more than fifteen pounds result in a fine of \$25 to \$100 or imprisonment up to thirty days; violations of fifteen to 500 pounds result in fines of \$200 to \$500 or imprisonment up to thirty days; and violations of more than 500 pounds result in a fine of \$500 to \$1,000, or imprisonment of up to one year, or both. The potential increase in expenses will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations. Judicial anticipates that the potential increase in caseload can be managed within existing resources. The potential increase in expenses for local jails will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations.

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to the potential increase in the caseload in court. Court fines and fees are distributed to the General Fund, Other Funds, and local funds. Therefore, RFA anticipates this bill may result in a change to local revenue due to the change in fines and fees collections in court.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 14, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill creates the offense of intentionally releasing balloons filled with lighter than air gas. Violations are punished pursuant to Section 16-11-700 regarding dumping litter on private or public property.

Judicial anticipates this bill may result in an increase in the number of cases in local courts, which may increase the workload of the court system and downstream expenses such as court interpreting. The potential increase will depend on the number of people who are currently engaging in conduct that will now be deemed contrary to the law and how vigorously the law will be enforced. Judicial anticipates the increased expenses can be initially managed within existing appropriations. However, Judicial indicated that if the increase in the caseload and corresponding downstream expenses is significant, it will request additional General Fund appropriations.

State Revenue

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to the potential increase in the caseload in court. Court fines and fees are distributed to the General Fund, Other Funds, and local funds. Therefore, RFA anticipates this bill may result in a change to revenue due to the change in fines and fees collections in court.

Local Expenditure

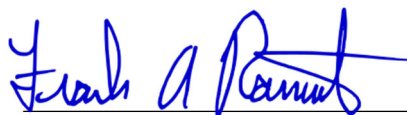
RFA contacted all counties in the state and MASC to determine the potential expenditure impact this bill may have for local governments. We received a response from Charleston County, Florence County, Lancaster County, and MASC. Charleston, Florence, and Lancaster Counties indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. Additionally, MASC notes that municipalities may also incur costs related to law enforcement training.

This bill may result in an increase in the number of local court cases and potentially the number of incarcerations, which may increase the workload of the court system and local jails. The newly created misdemeanor is punished pursuant to section 16-11-700 which categorizes offenses by the weight of litter. Violations of not more than fifteen pounds result in a fine of \$25 to \$100 or imprisonment up to thirty days; violations of fifteen to 500 pounds result in fines of \$200 to \$500 or imprisonment up to thirty days; and violations of more than 500 pounds result in a fine of \$500 to \$1,000, or imprisonment of up to one year, or both. The potential increase in expenses will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations. Judicial anticipates that the potential increase in caseload can be managed within existing

resources. The potential increase in expenses for local jails will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations.

Local Revenue

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to the potential increase in the caseload in court. Court fines and fees are distributed to the General Fund, Other Funds, and local funds. Therefore, RFA anticipates this bill may result in a change to local revenue due to the change in fines and fees collections in court.



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director