



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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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. 5059	Introduced on January 29, 2026
Subject:	Catawba Nation Police Department	
Requestor:	House Judiciary	
RFA Analyst(s):	Gardner	
Impact Date:	April 16, 2026	

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill provides that the Catawba Indian Nation Police Department is recognized as an official law enforcement agency of the state and creates a new misdemeanor offense for false representation as an officer of the department. Additionally, all Catawba Indian Nation police officer candidates may attend and be trained at the Criminal Justice Academy (CJA), and CJA must provide access and certification to qualified Catawba Indian Nation police officer candidates.

This bill may result in an increase in the number of circuit court cases and potentially the number of incarcerations due to the new misdemeanor, which may increase the workload of the court system and the Department of Corrections. Judicial anticipates that the potential impact of the caseload in court can be managed within existing appropriations. Additionally, we anticipate the potential increase in expenses for Corrections will depend upon the increased number of incarcerations but expect that the potential increase in incarcerations can be managed within existing appropriations. For information, according to Corrections, in FY 2024-25, the annual total cost per inmate was \$37,503, of which \$35,696 was state funded.

This bill will have no expenditure impact for CJA as the agency anticipates being able to manage the additional responsibilities required by this bill with existing staff and within existing appropriations.

This bill may increase the number of individuals imprisoned in local jails due to the new misdemeanor. The potential increase in expenses for local jails will depend upon the increase in the number of incarcerations.

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

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 29, 2026

State Expenditure

This bill provides that the Catawba Indian Nation Police Department is recognized as an official law enforcement agency of the state. Police officers of the nation must undergo and pass the same course of training required of sheriff's deputies in the state. This department, which will operate under the inherent sovereignty of the Catawba Nation, is authorized to enforce federal and state criminal laws, as well as the nation's own tribal laws.

Police officers of the nation have the power to arrest persons outside the lands of the nation when the person has committed a criminal offense within Catawba lands, provided the arrest is made during the person's immediate and continuous flight from that territory. The department is also authorized to enter into mutual aid, cross deputization, or intergovernmental agreements under certain circumstances. Police officers of the nation will be afforded the same immunities, legal protections, and indemnification as state and local law enforcement officers under state law and any other protections provided by law.

The bill also provides that it is unlawful for a person to falsely represent himself as a Catawba police officer, agent, or employee thereof or to act as such; a person violating this provision is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine between \$50 and \$1,000, imprisoned between 10 and 90 days, or both.

This bill may result in an increase in the number of circuit court cases and potentially the number of incarcerations, which may increase the workload of the court system and the Department of Corrections. Judicial anticipates that the potential impact of the caseload in court can be managed within existing appropriations. Additionally, we anticipate the potential increase in expenses for Corrections will depend upon the increased number of incarcerations but expect that the potential increase in incarcerations can be managed within existing appropriations. For information, according to Corrections, in FY 2024-25, the annual total cost per inmate was \$37,503, of which \$35,696 was state funded.

This bill will have no expenditure impact for CJA as the agency anticipates being able to manage the additional responsibilities required by this bill with existing staff and within existing appropriations.

State Revenue

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to an 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 General Fund and Other Funds revenue due to the change in fines and fees collections in court.

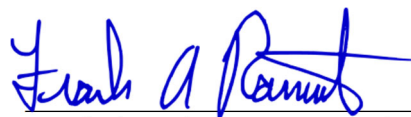
Local Expenditure

This bill also creates a misdemeanor for a person who falsely identifies himself at a Catawba police officer and, upon conviction, the person must be fined between \$50 and \$1,000 or imprisoned between 10 and 90 days, or both.

This bill may increase the number of individuals imprisoned in local jails. The potential increase in expenses for local jails will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations.

Local Revenue

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Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director