



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: S. 0175 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Helping Alleviate Lawful Obstruction (HALO) Act
Requestor: Senate Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s): Gardner
Impact Date: February 24, 2026

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill creates the Helping Alleviate Lawful Obstruction (HALO) Act, which creates a misdemeanor offense for a person who, after receiving a verbal warning not to approach from a person he knows or reasonably should know is a first responder who is engaged in the lawful performance of a legal duty, to knowingly and willfully violate the warning and approach or remain within twenty-five feet of the first responder with the intent to (1) impede or interfere with the first responder's ability to perform his duty; (2) threaten the first responder with harm; or (3) harass or taunt the first responder. This offense is punishable by a fine of not more than \$500 and imprisonment for not more than 60 days.

This bill may increase the number of cases heard in general sessions courts and may therefore increase the workloads for Judicial, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, and the Commission on Indigent Defense. However, as this is a new offense, there are no data to estimate the number of additional cases that may be heard by the courts. Additionally, the potential increase in expenses for each agency will depend upon the increase in the number of cases. Judicial anticipates that the potential impact of the caseload in court can be managed within existing appropriations. However, Judicial and these agencies indicate that if this bill results in a significant increase in the workload, then an increase in General Fund appropriations may be requested.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) surveyed South Carolina counties and the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) as to the potential fiscal impact of the bill and received responses from the counties of Horry and Florence. Additionally, we received responses from Charleston County, Dorchester County, and MASC on similar legislation. Based on these responses, MASC anticipates this bill will have no expenditure impact on municipalities. Additionally, Florence County and Horry County both indicate that any additional expense due to this bill can be managed within existing resources. Both Charleston County and Dorchester County anticipate this bill may have an undetermined local expenditure impact depending upon the increase in the workload for local law enforcement and jails.

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected 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, Other Funds, and 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 Helping Alleviate Lawful Obstruction (HALO) Act, which makes it unlawful for a person to knowingly and willfully approach, impede, interfere, threaten to cause harm to, or harass or taunt a first responder engaged in the performance of his official duties after the offender receives a verbal warning. This offense is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$500 and imprisonment for not more than 60 days.

This bill may increase the number of cases heard in general sessions courts and may therefore increase the workloads for Judicial, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, and the Commission on Indigent Defense. However, as this is a new offense, there are no data to estimate the number of additional cases that may be heard by the courts. Additionally, the potential increase in expenses for each agency will depend upon the increase in the number of cases. Judicial anticipates that the potential impact of the caseload in court can be managed within existing appropriations. However, Judicial and these agencies indicate that if this bill results in a significant increase in the workload, then an increase in General Fund appropriations may be requested.

State Revenue

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to the new offense established by this bill. 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

RFA surveyed South Carolina counties and MASC as to the potential fiscal impact of the bill and received responses from the counties of Horry and Florence. Additionally, we received responses from Charleston County, Dorchester County, and MASC on similar legislation. Based on these responses, MASC anticipates this bill will have no expenditure impact on municipalities. Additionally, Florence County and Horry County both indicate that any additional expense due to this bill can be managed within existing resources. Both Charleston County and Dorchester County anticipate this bill may have an undetermined local expenditure impact depending upon the increase in the workload for local law enforcement and jails.

Local Revenue

This bill may result in a change in the fines and fees collected in court due to the establishment of a new offense. Court fines and fees are distributed to the General Fund, Other Funds, and local funds. Therefore, RFA anticipates that 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