



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. 0702 Prefiled on December 10, 2025
Subject: Criminal Coercive Control
Requestor: Senate Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s): Vesely
Impact Date: January 12, 2026

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill expands the definition for a household member in Chapter 25 of Title 16, relating to domestic violence, to include persons who are currently or have been in a dating relationship. Additionally, this bill specifies that coercive control over a person's own household members is unlawful and considered domestic violence. This bill also expands the grounds for divorce to include domestic violence and domestic abuse against a spouse or minor child and adds stalking and harassment as a consideration for the best interest of a child when issuing or modifying a custody order.

This bill may result in an increase in the caseload in Family and Magistrate Courts. Judicial is unable to estimate the potential impact as the number of cases that will be filed as a result of this bill and any additional resources needed for these cases is unknown. However, Judicial anticipates that the impact due to the bill can be managed within existing resources. Judicial notes that if this bill results in a significant unanticipated increase to the caseload of the court system, Judicial will request an increase in General Fund appropriations.

Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (RFA) also contacted all counties to determine the local fiscal impact of this bill and received responses from the counties of Abbeville, Charleston, Cherokee, Clarendon, Dorchester, and Horry. The counties of Charleston, Cherokee, Clarendon, Dorchester, and Horry did not indicate that this bill would increase local expenses. Abbeville County anticipates the need to promote a part-time clerk to full-time to support the increase in the caseload in Magistrates Court, increase the magistrates judges' working hours, hire an additional clerk in the Clerk of Courts Office due to the potential increase in the caseload for Family Court, and purchase office supplies. Therefore, Abbeville County anticipates this bill may result in an increase in expenses by as much as \$119,400 in FY 2026-27 and \$116,600 each year thereafter.

Additionally, the increase in caseloads in Family and Magistrate Courts may result in an increase 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 an increase to General Fund, Other Funds, and local revenue due to the increase in fines and fees collections in court.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Prefiled on December 10, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill expands the definition for a household member in Chapter 25 of Title 16, relating to domestic violence, to include persons who are currently or have been in a dating relationship. Additionally, this bill specifies that coercive control over a person's own household members is unlawful and considered domestic violence. This bill also expands the grounds for divorce to include domestic violence and domestic abuse against a spouse or minor child and adds stalking and harassment as a consideration for the best interest of a child when issuing or modifying a custody order.

This bill may result in an increase in the caseload in Family and Magistrate Courts. Judicial is unable to estimate the potential impact as the number of cases that will be filed as a result of this bill and any additional resources needed for these cases is unknown. However, Judicial anticipates that the impact to the caseload on the court system due to this bill can be managed within existing resources. Judicial notes that if this bill results in a significant unanticipated increase to the caseload of the court system, Judicial will request an increase in General Fund appropriations.

State Revenue

This bill may increase the caseload in Family and Magistrate Courts, resulting in an increase 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 an increase to General Fund and Other Funds revenue due to the increase in fines and fees collections in court.

Local Expenditure

RFA also contacted all counties to determine the local fiscal impact of this bill and received responses from the counties of Abbeville, Charleston, Cherokee, Clarendon, Dorchester, and Horry. The counties of Charleston, Cherokee, Clarendon, Dorchester, Horry did not indicate that this bill would increase local expenses. Abbeville County anticipates the need to promote a part-time clerk to full-time to support the increase in the caseload in Magistrates Court, increase the magistrates judges' working hours, and hire an additional clerk in the Clerk of Courts Office due to the potential increase in the caseload for Family Court. This will increase salary and fringe expenses by approximately \$116,600 annually. Abbeville also anticipates purchasing office supplies at an expense of up to \$2,800 in FY 2026-27. Therefore, Abbeville County anticipates this bill may result in an increase in expenses by as much as \$119,400 in FY 2026-27 and \$116,600 each year thereafter.

Local Revenue

This bill may increase the caseload in Family and Magistrate Courts, resulting in an increase 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 an increase to local revenue due to the increase in fines and fees collections in court.



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director