



# SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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**Bill Number:** S. 0714    Introduced on January 13, 2026  
**Subject:** Judicial Seat, Sixth Judicial Circuit Court  
**Requestor:** Senate Judiciary  
**RFA Analyst(s):** Gardner  
**Impact Date:** January 15, 2026

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## Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill increases the number of circuit court judges elected in South Carolina by one, such that the sixth circuit will now have two elected circuit court judges instead of one. This bill takes effect on July 1, 2027. Judicial indicates that the recurring impact for the additional judge and associated staff and operating expenses will be \$750,000 beginning in FY 2027-28. Judicial notes they have requested funding for four additional circuit court seats, including an additional circuit court seat in the sixth circuit, in their FY 2026-27 budget request.

## Explanation of Fiscal Impact

### Introduced on January 13, 2026

#### State Expenditure

This bill increases the number of circuit court judges elected in South Carolina. Currently, there are a total of forty-six circuit court judges elected from the state’s existing sixteen judicial circuits. The bill expands the number of elected circuit court judges by one by requiring an additional circuit court judge be elected from the sixth circuit. This bill takes effect on July 1, 2027.

Judicial anticipates the need to hire a new judge, an administrative assistant, a court reporter, and a law clerk, for a total of four new FTEs. In addition, Judicial anticipates an increase in annual operating expenses. Judicial anticipates these needs will result in a recurring expenditure impact of \$668,750 to cover the new positions and \$81,250 to cover operating expenses. Therefore, the recurring expenditure impact of the bill will be \$750,000 beginning in FY 2027-28. Judicial notes they have requested funding for four additional circuit court seats, including an additional circuit court seat in the sixth circuit, in their FY 2026-27 budget request.

#### State Revenue

N/A

#### Local Expenditure and Revenue

N/A

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director