



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. 0808 Introduced on January 14, 2026
Subject: Interference with Workers Providing Critical Services
Requestor: Senate Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s): Gardner
Impact Date: January 28, 2026

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill expands offenses constituting illegal acts during a state of emergency. This expansion includes the act of willfully and knowingly harassing a worker restoring critical services as a misdemeanor offense, the act of willfully and knowingly assaulting or engaging in behavior that could endanger a worker restoring critical services as a felony offense, and the destruction, damaging, or tampering with an electric utility system as a felony offense.

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 Commission of Indigent Defense, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, and the Department of Corrections. However, there are no data available to determine the increase caseload and number of incarcerations. Judicial anticipates that the potential impact of the caseload in court can be managed within existing appropriations, unless this bill results in a significant increase in expense. Additionally, the potential increase in expenses for each agency will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of incarcerations. 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. 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.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) contacted all counties in the state and the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) to determine the local expenditure impact of this bill and received a response from Horry County. Horry County anticipates being able to manage the additional responsibilities within existing resources.

Additionally, this bill may result in an increase in the number of cases heard in local court and potentially the number of imprisonments at local jails due to the new misdemeanor. The potential increase in local expenses will depend upon the increase in the number of cases and number of imprisonments.

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 the 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, 2026

State Expenditure

This bill expands offenses constituting illegal acts during a state of emergency. This expansion includes the act of willfully and knowingly harassing a worker restoring critical services as a misdemeanor offense, the act of willfully and knowingly assaulting or engaging in behavior that could endanger a worker restoring critical services as a felony offense, and the destruction, damaging, or tampering with an electric utility system as a felony offense. Such critical services include those involving electric and gas services, water and sewer services, road and highway repair, telephone or cell service, satellite or internet service, and other services necessary for home and commercial purposes. The misdemeanor offense is punishable by a fine of not more than \$500, imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both. The felony offenses are punishable by a fine or imprisonment, or both, at the sentencing discretion of the court.

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State Revenue

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 the General Fund and Other Funds 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 local expenditure impact of this bill and received a response from Horry County. Horry County anticipates being able to manage the additional responsibilities within existing resources.

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Local Revenue

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Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director