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. 0829 Introduced on January 20, 2026
Subject:	Joint System Governance
Requestor:	Senate Judiciary
RFA Analyst(s):	Welsh
Impact Date:	January 30, 2026

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill amends provisions of the Joint Authority Water and Sewer Systems Act, Chapter 25 of Title 6. This bill revises the process and information that must be provided in a joint system's filing to the Secretary of State. This bill also allows commissioners to be appointed by the Governor as an alternative to appointment by a joint system's governing body, set rules for qualifications and removal of commissioners, and allows the addition of new commissioners if a new member is added to the joint system. Further, this bill allows joint systems to reconstitute themselves and sets forth the procedures for doing so, while permitting former members to withdraw prior to reconstitution. This bill specifies that commissions fully appointed by the Governor may issue bonds with automatic extensions by a majority vote without separate approval from the governing bodies.

This bill will have no fiscal impact on the Office of the Governor, the House of Representatives, and the Senate as each anticipates any additional duties required by this bill can be managed within the normal course of business.

This bill will have no impact on the Secretary of State's Office. The agency anticipates the creation of an application for joint systems and subsequent processing of submitted applications will be managed with existing staff and resources.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) contacted all counties in the state and the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) to determine the potential expenditure impact this bill may have for local governments. We received a response from Charleston County, Horry County, Lancaster County, and MASC. Horry and Lancaster Counties indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. Charleston County anticipates that this bill may increase expenses by an undetermined amount by allowing commissioners appointed by the Governor to increase the amount and duration of debt obligations without oversight from county council. Additionally, MASC anticipates this bill may have an undetermined impact on municipalities dependent upon costs incurred due to loss of municipal government oversight of commissioners' decisions, particularly related to the amount and term of debt issued by a joint system. MASC also notes municipalities may find it more difficult and costly to withdraw from a joint system in situations where capacity rights, long-term contracts, or bond obligations exist.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 20, 2026
State Expenditure
This bill revises the process and information that must be provided in a joint system's filing to the Secretary of State. This bill also allows commissioners to be appointed by the Governor as an alternative to appointment by a joint system's governing body, set rules for qualifications and removal of commissioners, and allows the addition of new commissioners if a new member is added to the joint system. Further, this bill allows joint systems to reconstitute themselves and sets forth the procedures for doing so, while permitting former members to withdraw prior to reconstitution. This bill specifies that commissions fully appointed by the Governor may issue bonds with automatic extensions by a majority vote without separate approval from the governing bodies.

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This bill will have no impact on the Secretary of State's Office. The agency anticipates the creation of an application for joint systems and subsequent processing of submitted applications will be managed with existing staff and resources.

State Revenue
N/A

Local Expenditure
This bill revises the process and information that must be provided in a joint system's filing to the Secretary of State. This bill also allows commissioners to be appointed by the Governor as an alternative to appointment by a joint system's governing body, set rules for qualifications and removal of commissioners, and allows the addition of new commissioners if a new member is added to the joint system. Further, this bill allows joint systems to reconstitute themselves and sets forth the procedures for doing so, while permitting former members to withdraw prior to reconstitution. This bill specifies that commissions fully appointed by the Governor may issue bonds with automatic extensions by a majority vote without separate approval from the governing bodies.

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Local Revenue
N/A

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director