

## OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-1541

AN ACT CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF THE CORRECTION OMBUDS, DISCLOSURE OF DISCIPLINARY MATTERS OR ALLEGED MISCONDUCT BY A DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION EMPLOYEE AND USE OF FORCE AND BODY CAMERAS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

As Amended by Senate "A" (LCO 9157)

House Calendar No.: 646

Senate Calendar No.: 419

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### ***OFA Fiscal Note***

#### ***State Impact:***

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Governmental Accountability, Off.	GF - Cost	166,531	155,031
Governmental Accountability, Off.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF - Cost	63,113	63,113

Note: GF=General Fund

***Municipal Impact:*** None

#### ***Explanation***

The bill makes a variety of changes regarding the role of the Office of the Correction Ombudsman (OCO) within the Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA) including increasing the term of office, expanding existing authority and obligations, and the publication of a database of cases against the Department of Corrections (DOC) resulting in the following fiscal impacts.

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<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

Primary Analyst: TM  
Contributing Analyst(s):  
Reviewer: PR

5/23/25

**Section 2**, of the bill requires the OCO to provide at least one of three confidential means of communication to receive complaints<sup>2</sup> resulting in a cost of up to \$6,500 in FY 26. The exact cost will depend on the method chosen.

**Section 3**, of the bill empowers OCO to conduct informal hearings and issue subpoenas for investigations requiring two additional employees<sup>3</sup> resulting in a cost to OCO of \$160,031 in FY 26 and \$155,031 in FY 27, and an associated fringe benefit cost of \$63,113 in FY 26 and FY 27.

This cost is associated with the expanded investigative role of OCO, the additional legal work and administrative support required to conduct informal hearings and to receive testimony and material as investigations require.

This section also results in a potential cost to OCO related to the conduct of hearings, because the bill requires that these hearings be conducted at a time that does not interfere with corrections facility operations. The exact cost would depend on the number of informal hearings conducted and the associated overtime and material cost required.

**Section 6** requires the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) with OCO to publish certain files on its website resulting in no fiscal impact because the OAG has the resources and expertise to meet the requirements of the bill.

Senate "A" makes several changes including changing the date of required publications against the DOC on the OCO website and eliminating a previous provision requiring GOV to oversee a complaints

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<sup>2</sup> This includes through electronic means, secured lock boxes, or a hotline to call the OCO. The total cost to install a secured lock box in each facility, is \$6,500. The cost to create a hotline, is expected to be minimal as the phones are already installed in the facilities.

<sup>3</sup> This includes an Assistant Correction Ombudsman at an annual salary cost of \$91,254 and an Administrative Assistant at an annual salary cost of \$63,777.

process for OCO, reducing the cost of the underlying bill.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of informal processes conducted as a result of the legislation.

*The preceding Fiscal Impact statement is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for the purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*