



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. 0144 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Firefighter Emergency Transportation Exemption
Requestor: Senate Medical Affairs
RFA Analyst(s): Griffith and Boggs
Impact Date: January 29, 2025

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill allows a firefighter to transport a patient in a vehicle other than an ambulance when there is a patient suffering from a condition requiring an emergency response, but licensed ambulances in the locality are insufficient or unavailable to provide emergency medical services imminently at the patient's location. Additionally, the appropriate emergency medical service provider must be notified of the patient's condition requiring an emergency response.

State Fire, a division within the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR), is responsible for training and certification of firefighters. Since the bill does not operationally or fiscally impact the agency, there is no expenditure impact to LLR.

The Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) is responsible for the administration and management of the state's retirement systems and employee insurance programs for South Carolina's public workforce. This bill does not impact the state health plan. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on PEBA.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) does not anticipate that this bill will have a fiscal impact on the agency since the bill does not alter the responsibilities of the agency.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) operates South Carolina's Healthy Connections (Medicaid), which pays medical bills for eligible low-income families and individuals. According to DHHS, if the transport is being conducted by entities not licensed by DPH, there may be a decrease in Medicaid reimbursement for ambulance transport.

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (RFA) contacted county governments and the Municipal Association of SC (MASC) regarding the fiscal impact of this bill on local fire departments. The two responding counties do not anticipate a significant impact on expenses, but one of the counties did express liability concerns. Further, the MASC anticipates increased expenditures due to increased liabilities and operating costs related to the transport of patients. However, any potential increase in expenses to local governments are undetermined and will vary by locality.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 14, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill allows a firefighter to transport a patient in a vehicle other than an ambulance when the patient is suffering from a condition requiring an emergency response, but licensed ambulances in the locality are insufficient or unavailable to provide emergency medical services imminently at the patient's location. Additionally, the appropriate emergency medical service provider must be notified of the patient's condition requiring an emergency response.

Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. State Fire, a division within LLR, is responsible for training and certification of firefighters. Since the bill does not operationally or fiscally impact the agency, there is no expenditure impact to LLR.

Public Employee Benefit Authority. PEBA is responsible for the administration and management of the state's retirement systems and employee insurance programs for South Carolina's public workforce. This bill does not impact the state health plan. Therefore, this bill will have no fiscal impact on PEBA.

Department of Public Health. DPH houses the Division of EMS and Trauma which monitors and develops protocols, designates trauma centers, and certifies Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics and Athletic Trainers. DPH does not anticipate that this bill will have a fiscal impact on the agency since the bill does not alter the responsibilities of the agency.

Department of Health and Human Services. DHHS operates South Carolina's Medicaid program, which pays medical bills for eligible low-income families and individuals. According to DHHS, if the transport is being conducted by entities not licensed by DPH, there may be a decrease in Medicaid reimbursement for ambulance transport.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

RFA contacted county governments and the MASC regarding the fiscal impact of this bill. Dorchester County does not anticipate a significant increase in expenditures due to the provisions of the bill. Florence County also does not anticipate an increase in expenditures but did express liability concerns. The MASC anticipates that potential costs to municipalities would come from increased exposure to lawsuits and from expenses related to vehicle usage for the transport of patients. Additionally, the Ruby Mt. Croghan Volunteer Fire Department indicates that potential expenses would come from operating and fuel costs, training for personnel, cleaning materials, and repairs, if damages arise during transport. However, any increase in expenses for local governments are undetermined and will vary by locality.

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director