

Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note

**FINAL
FISCAL NOTE**

Drafting Number: LLS 14-0684	Date: July 8, 2014
Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Scott; Ferrandino Sen. Schwartz	Bill Status: Signed into Law
	Fiscal Analyst: Kerry White (303-866-3469)

SHORT TITLE: LEGISLATURE TAKE PUBLIC TESTIMONY REMOTE LOCATIONS

Fiscal Impact Summary*	FY 2014-2015	FY 2015-2016
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	<u>\$147,338</u>	<u>at least \$124,310</u>
General Fund	135,354	111,651
Centrally Appropriated Costs**	11,984	12,659
FTE Position Change	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Appropriation Required: \$135,354 - Legislative Council Staff (FY 2014-15)		

* This summary shows changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year.

** These costs are not included in the bill's appropriation. See the State Expenditures section for more information.

Summary of Legislation

This bill allows the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council to consider, recommend, and establish policies allowing legislative committees to take remote testimony from one or more locations in Colorado. If remote testimony is approved, at least one remote site must be located in the western slope area of Colorado. Conferencing technology may be implemented in phases and is not required to provide visual capabilities. The Executive Committee is authorized to enter into agreements with state institutions of higher education to host remote sites and provide facilities, equipment, and staff. By August 1, 2016, Legislative Council Staff is required to prepare a report to the members of the General Assembly providing outcome data concerning the implementation of the bill.

Background

Multiple states allow for some form of remote testimony, including teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or internet-based services. These states include Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

State Expenditures

This bill will increase state General Fund expenditures by \$147,338 and 1.0 FTE in FY 2014-15 and by at least \$124,310 and 1.0 FTE per year thereafter. Table 1 and the discussion that follows describe the cost components of the bill.

Table 1. Expenditures Under HB14-1303		
Cost Components	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16
Personal Services	\$83,701	\$83,701
FTE	1.0	1.0
Operating Expenses and Capital Outlay Costs	5,653	950
Computer Programming	20,000	0
Remote Testimony Software	11,000	12,000
Remote Staffing Support	15,000	15,000
Centrally Appropriated Costs*	11,984	12,659
TOTAL	\$147,338	at least \$124,310

* Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Legislative Council Staff. Legislative Council Staff will be responsible for implementing and administering remote testimony for legislative committees, and preparing a report to the General Assembly providing outcome data. Workload will increase in the first year to develop the program and establish agreements with state institutions of higher education. Costs shown in Table 1 are based on the following assumptions:

- video teleconferencing will be provided at various state institutions of higher education located throughout Colorado, including at least one on the western slope;
- approximately 100 hours of onsite support will be provided at an average of five locations at a cost of \$30 per hour, for a total of \$15,000 per legislative session;
- one-time web configuration and programming costs of \$20,000 are required in FY 2014-15 only;
- remote testimony software is \$1,000 per month, prorated in the first year to reflect the bill's effective date;
- the equivalent of 1.0 FTE information technology specialist (based on an annualized salary of \$75,000 and including standard operating and capital outlay costs) will be required to provide logistics, coordination, and information technology support to legislative committees during each legislative session; and
- costs for staff and remote staffing support could increase beginning in FY 2015-16 depending on the demand for remote testimony and, should this occur, Legislative Council Staff will request additional appropriations through the annual budget process.

Department of Higher Education. As shown in Table 1, the Department of Higher Education will increase costs by \$15,000 per year to provide facilities, support, and resources for the five remote testimony sites. The fiscal note assumes that selected institutions will enter into agreements with Legislative Council Staff, for which workload will increase by a minimal amount.

Centrally appropriated costs. Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. The centrally appropriated costs subject to this policy are estimated in the fiscal note for informational purposes and summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Centrally Appropriated Costs Under HB14-1303*		
Cost Components	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16
Employee Insurance (Health, Life, Dental, and Short-term Disability)	\$6,171	\$6,171
Supplemental Employee Retirement Payments	5,813	6,488
TOTAL	\$11,984	\$12,659

**More information is available at: <http://colorado.gov/fiscalnotes>*

Effective Date

The bill was signed into law by the Governor on May 31, 2014, and takes effect August 6, 2014, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

For FY 2014-15, the bill provides an appropriation of \$135,354 General Fund and an allocation of 1.0 FTE for Legislative Council Staff.

State and Local Government Contacts

Higher Education

Legislative Council Staff