



**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
Fiscal Note**

Fiscal Note On: **SB 144** SLS 25RS 171  
 Bill Text Version: **ENROLLED**  
 Opp. Chamb. Action:  
 Proposed Amd.:  
 Sub. Bill For.:

<b>Date:</b> June 5, 2025	11:56 AM	<b>Author:</b> WOMACK
<b>Dept./Agy.:</b> Vidalia Port Commission		
<b>Subject:</b> Debt Issuance Authority		<b>Analyst:</b> Barry Kelly

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 Provides relative to the issuance of bonds by the Vidalia Port Commission. (gov sig)

**Purpose of Bill:** This bill repeals the \$15 million cap on the amount of bonds that the Vidalia Port Commission (Commission) can have outstanding at any one time. It also repeals provisions that made these bonds a general obligation of the Commission and backed by the full faith and credit of City of Vidalia.

EXPENDITURES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<b>SEE BELOW</b>					
<b>Annual Total</b>						
REVENUES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<b>SEE BELOW</b>					
<b>Annual Total</b>						

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION**

**This bill expands the Vidalia Port Commission’s (Commission) authority to issue debt.** As a result, this bill may increase Commission expenditures related to debt issuance to the extent that the Commission issues debt that it could not otherwise issue under current law. However, the exact timing and amounts of this impact, if any, is currently indeterminable.

The Commission has plans for two projects with current cost estimates totaling \$30 million (\$15 million for each). The two projects that the Commission is planning to carry out are the Slack-Water Slip Project and the Rail Reconstruction Project. Estimated dates for project initiation range from 2025 to 2027, but could be later.

The Commission indicated that it may need to borrow funds to pay for these projects, which could potentially increase its total outstanding debt to a maximum of \$30 million (\$15 million above its current debt limit). While this borrowing is anticipated to occur within the next five years, the specific timing, amounts, and terms of the debt are unknown at this time, as all project details are not yet finalized. Therefore, if the Commission uses the expanded authority provided by this bill to borrow amounts greater than is allowed under current law, expenditures related to this debt (e.g. interest payments) would increase accordingly, but the exact fiscal impact of this bill is indeterminable at this time due to these uncertainties.

Removing the pledge of the full faith and credit of the City of Vidalia appears to eliminate the city's legal obligation to cover debt service payments should the Commission default on bonds issued under this revised statute. Based on information from the Commission, it appears that this provision, historically, has not been triggered as the Commission, historically, has not had debt. Therefore, the repeal of this provision is not expected to have a direct material impact on the expenditures of the City of Vidalia.

**REVENUE EXPLANATION**

**This bill expands the Vidalia Port Commission’s (Commission) authority to issue debt.** As a result, this bill does not have a direct material impact on Commission revenue, as proceeds from issuing debt are not considered revenue. However, this bill may increase funds available for projects to the extent that the Commission issues debt that it could otherwise not issue under current law. It should be noted that a Commission official indicated that these projects are expected to generate revenue for the Commission once completed, but detailed current estimates are not available.

Senate Dual Referral Rules  
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}  
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House  
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}  
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

**Michael G. Battle**  
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