

**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
Fiscal Note**

Fiscal Note On: **SB 217** SLS 26RS 510
 Bill Text Version: **REENGROSSED**
 Opp. Chamb. Action: **w/ CONF COMM AMD**
 Proposed Amd.:
 Sub. Bill For.:

Date: June 1, 2026	4:50 PM	Author: MORRIS, JAY
Dept./Agy.: Orleans Parish Courts		Analyst: Barry Kelly
Subject: Operations of the Courts		

COURTS REC SEE FISC NOTE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 2
 Provides for the administration of courts in Orleans Parish and the number of court judges. (2/3 - CA 5s15(D)) (8/1/26)

Purpose of Bill: This bill eliminates seven Orleans Parish judgeships by abolishing three Criminal District Court judgeships, two Municipal and Traffic Court judgeships, and two Orleans Parish Juvenile Court judgeships. It consolidates judicial funds into a single Consolidated Judicial Expense Fund (CJEF) managed by an executive committee. It transfers crier compensation to the Orleans Parish Sheriff, with the CJEF reimbursing the Sheriff in full in FY 2026-27 and thereafter based on an agreement. Additionally, the bill increases City Court civil limits to \$50,000, and shifts appellate jurisdiction for the First and Second City Courts and Municipal and Traffic Court from the Civil and Criminal District Courts to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal. It also allows for the optional salary supplementation of commissioners, authorizes the appointment of a Juvenile Court hearing officer/commissioner, removes statutory minimums for the number of Criminal Court law clerks and secretaries, and repeals current law that requires the State General Fund to pay for minute clerks and court reporters serving the four Criminal District Court commissioners.

EXPENDITURES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Agy. Self-Gen.	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Ded./Other	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Annual Total						

REVENUES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Annual Total						

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

This bill may annually decrease State General Fund Expenditures by approximately \$2 Million, Statutory Dedicated Expenditures by \$105,000, and Local Fund Expenditures by approximately \$2.4 Million. However, such reductions may be further affected by additional cost reductions and/or cost increases. The exact impacts are indeterminable as they depend on future management decisions and effects such as shifting of cases amongst courts. SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS:

Judges and Support Staff: Abolishing seven judgeships and related staff may decrease annual state costs by \$1,992,992 (\$1,887,704 General Fund + \$105,288 Statutorily Dedicated) and local costs by \$2,444,634 (\$2,404,634 City of New Orleans + \$40,000 Municipal/Traffic Court), as detailed below:

Category	Criminal	Muni/Traffic	Juvenile	Grand Total
Judges Eliminated	3	2	2	7
State General Fund (Judges + Staff)	\$1,249,054	\$163,338	\$475,312	\$1,887,704
Statutorily Dedicated (Judges)	\$56,064	\$11,848	\$37,376	\$105,288
Total State Decrease	\$1,305,118	\$175,186	\$512,688	\$1,992,992
Local Decrease (Judges + Staff)	\$925,064	\$947,000	\$572,570	\$2,444,634
GRAND TOTAL ANNUAL DECREASE	\$2,230,182	\$1,122,186	\$1,085,258	\$4,437,626

Note: Current law redirects local Juvenile judgeship savings to juvenile services within the City.

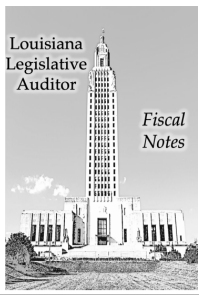
Expenditures Explanation Continued on Page 2

REVENUE EXPLANATION

This bill may increase agency self-generated and local fund revenues for the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal and First and Second City Courts while decreasing revenues for the Civil and Criminal District Courts as caseloads shift due to changes in jurisdiction related to appeals and civil limits. The exact fiscal impact is indeterminable as the volume, timing, and fees to be assessed on these transferred cases are currently unknown.
 Revenue Explanation Continued on Page 2

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|---|----------------------------|--|
| <u>Senate</u> | <u>Dual Referral Rules</u> | <u>House</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H} | | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S} |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H} | | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S} |

Michael G. Battle
 Manager, Advisory Services



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CONTINUED EXPLANATION from page one:

Expenditures Explanation Continued from Page 1

Criminal Court Minute Clerks and Stenographers/Court Reporters - The bill repeals current law that requires the State General Fund to pay for minute clerks and court reporters serving the four Criminal District Court commissioners.

Salary Supplement for Criminal Court Commissioners - The bill authorizes the payment of optional salary supplements for Criminal Court commissioners by the City of New Orleans or the Consolidated Judicial Expense Fund, as determined by the executive committee.

Criminal Court Law Clerks and Secretaries - The bill removes the statutory minimum number of law clerks and secretaries to be employed by the Criminal Court and allows the executive committee to approve the number of these positions.

Juvenile Court Hearing Officer/Commissioner - The bill authorizes Juvenile Court judges to appoint a hearing officer/commissioner for the Juvenile Court, noting that the City of New Orleans is not required to provide additional appropriations to support this position.

Caseload Shifts - The expansion of City Court civil limits and the rerouting of City Court and Municipal and Traffic Court appeals to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal may increase expenditures for the First and Second City Courts and the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal.

Crier Expenditures - This bill shifts the responsibility for Civil District Court criers to the Orleans Parish Sheriff, but requires the Consolidated Judicial Expense Fund to reimburse the sheriff for these costs in full in FY 2026-27 and thereafter based on an agreement between the fund's executive committee and the sheriff.

Revenue Explanation Continued from Page 1

Accounting and Control - This bill creates the Consolidated Judicial Expense Fund for the parish of Orleans to centralize the accounting and control of the judicial expense funds currently maintained separately by Criminal District Court and Civil District Court (including First and Second City Courts).

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}

Signature of Michael G. Battle
Michael G. Battle
Manager, Advisory Services