

**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR
Fiscal Note**

Fiscal Note On: **SB 452** SLS 24RS 135
 Bill Text Version: **ENROLLED**
 Opp. Chamb. Action:
 Proposed Amd.:
 Sub. Bill For.:

Date: May 29, 2024	11:22 AM	Author: MCMATH
Dept./Agy.: St. Tammany Parish Coroner		Analyst: Philip Fach
Subject: Coroner Qualifications and Oversight		

CORONERS EN SEE FISC NOTE LF RV See Note Page 1 of 2
 Provides relative to the coroner of St. Tammany Parish. (gov sig)

Purpose of Bill: This bill establishes new qualifications for the St. Tammany Parish Coroner (Coroner), provides for additional oversight of Coroner finances and operations by the St. Tammany Parish Government (Parish Government), transfers specific funds and immovable property from the Coroner to the Parish Government, changes the Parish Government's responsibility to fund Coroner operations, and requires a new cooperative endeavor agreement between the Coroner and the Parish Government.

Note: The property tax referenced in this bill is set to expire on December 31, 2024. Currently, Coroner expenditures are primarily funded by this tax. Upon expiration, these expenditures will need to be funded through other means.

EXPENDITURES	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
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

REVENUES	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
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 increase local government expenditures related to the transfer of oversight and management from the Coroner to the Parish Government. The exact impact is currently indeterminable.

Coroner Elections: St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court (Clerk) is required to verify the eligibility of coroner candidates, a duty not currently performed by the Clerk according to a Clerk official. While we do not have specific expenditure data for the Clerk, this requirement may increase the Clerk's expenditures if these duties cannot be performed with the Clerk's existing resources.

Parish Government Oversight: A Parish Government official indicated that the additional oversight duties provided by the bill are not expected to increase Parish Government expenditures. A Coroner official indicated that the Coroner's personnel and administrative expenditures may increase due to the maintenance and submission of certain records required by the bill. In addition, the Coroner official indicated that there may be increased costs for expert fees, investigations, and audits, with the exact amount of the impact dependent upon the scope of the investigations and audits.

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REVENUE EXPLANATION

This bill is not expected to decrease or increase overall governmental revenues, as this bill primarily changes the management and oversight of the property tax revenue from the Coroner to the Parish Government.

The exact amount of money to be transferred to the Parish Government from the Coroner is currently indeterminable due to differing estimates from the Parish Government and Coroner regarding the funds available for transfer [\$14 million and \$12 million respectively] and the amount the Parish Government will determine is needed for Coroner operations. It is important to note that recent audit reports (2021 and 2022) indicate average annual expenditures of approximately \$6.6 million and the Coroner's budgeted expenditures for 2024 are \$7.8 million.

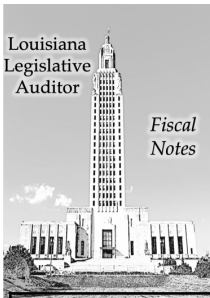
The impact of this bill on Coroner revenue depends on the costs/fees that the Parish Government will deduct from the property tax. A Parish Government official indicated that, while the Parish Government currently imposes some fees, no additional costs/fees are expected to be deducted due to this bill.

A Louisiana State Police official indicated that the State Police charges a \$26 fee for the background checks provided by the bill, which may increase State Police revenue depending on the number of Coroner candidates.

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}

M. G. Battle
Michael G. Battle
 Manager, Advisory Services



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EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

Immovable Property: There is uncertainty regarding the cost to transfer immovable property from the Coroner to the Parish Government. While a Parish Government official indicated that there is no immovable property currently subject to the transfer, the Coroner's office indicated there may be land and a building that may be subject to the transfer. If such property is transferred, local government expenditures may increase due to transfer-related costs (e.g., legal fees).

Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA): A Parish Government official indicated that the Parish Government may incur one-time legal expenditures of \$2,500 for the creation of a new CEA. The Coroner's office indicated an increase in legal and accounting fees of \$5,000 - \$10,000 (20 to 40 hours at \$250 per hour) for the creation of a new CEA and potential annual costs related to monitoring the Parish's and Coroner's compliance with the CEA, depending on the complexity of the CEA.

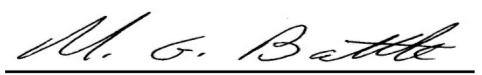
Senate

Dual Referral Rules

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 Manager, Advisory Services