

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NUMBER: SB 234

SHORT TITLE: Raise Age of Undisciplined Juveniles

SPONSOR(S): Senator Allran

FISCAL IMPACT: Expenditures: Increase (X) Decrease ()
Revenues: Increase () Decrease ()
No Impact ()
No Estimate Available ()

FUNDS AFFECTED: General Fund (X) Highway Fund () Local Fund ()
Other Fund ()

BILL SUMMARY: "TO RAISE THE AGE OF UNDISCIPLINED JUVENILES WHO ARE BEYOND THE DISCIPLINARY CONTROL OF THEIR PARENTS." Amends GS 7A-517(28) to include in the definition of "undisciplined juvenile" juveniles between the ages of 16 and 18 who are beyond the disciplinary control of their parents.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 1995; applies to actions arising on or after that date.

PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S)/PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED: Judicial Branch (Juvenile Services Division, District Courts)

This fiscal note presents two alternatives, intensive supervision and regular supervision, for determining the fiscal impact of the proposed legislation.

-Alternative 1 is intensive supervision with approximately 15 juveniles per counselor.

-Alternative 2 is regular supervision with an average of 40 juveniles per counselor.

Tables 1 and 2 reflect the cost of each alternative.

FISCAL IMPACT

**TABLE 1
ALTERNATIVE #1 -- INTENSIVE SUPERVISION**

<u>99-00</u>	Eff. 10/1 <u>FY 95-96</u>	<u>FY 96-97</u>	<u>FY 97-98</u>	<u>FY 98-99</u>	<u>FY</u>
Intake Counselors	228,000	290,392	299,104	308,077	
	317,319				
Intensive Supervision	2,907,000	3,702,498	3,813,573	3,927,980	
	4,045,820				
Counselors					
Clerical Support	466,776	453,852	467,468	481,492	
	495,936				
Contract Services	152,600	157,178	161,893	166,750	
	171,753				
Subtotal Juvenile	3,754,376	4,603,920	4,742,038	4,884,299	
	5,030,828				
Services					
Costs for Court Time	78,864	81,230	83,667	86,177	
	88,762				
Grand Total	3,833,240	4,685,150	4,825,705	4,970,476	
	5,119,590				

POSITIONS: JUVENILE COURT COUNSELORS
 Intake Counselors: 8
 Intensive Supervision Counselors: 102
 Clerical Support: 18

**TABLE 2
ALTERNATIVE #2 -- REGULAR SUPERVISION**

<u>99-00</u>	Eff. 10/1 <u>FY 95-96</u>	<u>FY 96-97</u>	<u>FY 97-98</u>	<u>FY 98-99</u>	<u>FY</u>
Intake Counselors	228,000	290,392	299,104	308,077	
	317,319				
Regular Supervision	1,083,000	1,379,362	1,420,743	1,463,365	
	1,507,266				
Counselors					
Clerical Support	207,456	201,712	207,763	213,996	
	220,416				
Subtotal Juvenile	1,518,456	1,871,466	1,927,610	1,985,438	
	2,045,001				

Services				
Costs for Court Time	78,864	81,230	83,667	86,177
88,762				
Grand Total	1,597,320	1,952,696	2,011,277	2,071,615
	2,133,763			

POSITIONS: JUVENILE COURT COUNSELORS
 Intake Counselors: 8
 Regular Supervision Counselors: 38
 Clerical Support: 8

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY: Judicial Branch

* The Administrative Office of the Courts has provided the following information regarding the fiscal impact of this proposed legislation. The Fiscal Research Division has reviewed this information and is in agreement with their findings and conclusions.

The Administrative Office of the Courts estimates that there would be 3,290 additional undisciplined juveniles age 16 or 17 referred for intake (review of case) under this bill. Of the 3,290 additional undisciplined juveniles, 1,908 would be referred to court. Of this number, 1,526 would be placed under the supervision of court counselors.

This note presents two alternatives for determining the fiscal impact of this bill. The following paragraphs describe the base costs common to both alternatives; then, each alternative and its associated cost is discussed.

Counselor Costs: An estimated eight intake counselors would be needed for these 3,290 juveniles (caseload average of 424) for Alternatives I or II. Intake counselors assess and make recommendations regarding referral of the juvenile to counseling supervision. The estimated first fiscal year cost, with an effective legislation date of October 1, 1995, would be \$228,000 (at a nine-month position cost of \$28,500). Not including recurring costs, the continuation costs for these counselors for subsequent years would be \$281,936 (\$35,242 per position); however, costs for 1996-97 and subsequent years are increased by 3%.

Court Cost: It would require district-by-district analysis to identify the extent to which additional positions might be needed for district court judges, clerks, or other personnel. Although specific needs for such positions are not itemized, the workload of the courts would increase as a result of this bill, and it is possible to estimate the costs that would be associated with the additional hearings for the additional undisciplined cases.

Some of the estimated 3,290 juveniles handled by the intake counselors would probably be screened out with little or no court time involved. Based conservatively on the estimated 1,908 juveniles referred for supervision, at an estimated one-half hour per hearing, the cost for court time would be \$78,864 (at \$496 per day, based on six-hours of court time per day, for a district court judge and courtroom clerk). This estimate is increased by 3% each year after 1995-96.

Clerical Support: The Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Services Division concludes that growing workloads have now reached the point where additional responsibilities, such as under this proposed legislation, cannot be added without additional clerical support. The

following table indicates the number of additional clerical support required for each alternative at a 1:6 ratio of clerical staff to counselor, which is the current statewide ratio.

	<u># of Clerical Positions</u>
Intensive Supervision	18
Regular Supervision	8

These positions would cost \$25,932 per position, including non-recurring costs of \$7,572 per position, for the first nine months. Not including non-recurring costs, the continuation salary and benefits for these clerical support positions would be \$24,480 per position; however, costs for 1996-97 and subsequent years are increased by 3%.

ALTERNATIVE 1 -- INTENSIVE SUPERVISION

The Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Services Division estimates that of the 3,290 juveniles, 1,526 would be placed under supervision. Alternative 1 is based on need for 102 juvenile court counselors for intensive supervision based on current caseload and supervision standards (caseload average of 15).

The Division recommends intensive supervision for these juveniles as its preferred alternative. Prior experience with supervision of these youth in the 1970's and current research indicates the benefit of intensive supervision outweighs regular supervision due to lower caseloads and more family involvement. The estimated first year cost, with an effective legislation date of October 1, 1995, would be \$2,907,000 (at a nine month position cost of 28,500, including \$2,758 in non-recurring costs per position). Not including non-recurring costs, the continuation costs for these counselors would be \$3,594,684 (at \$35,242 per position); however, costs for 1996-97 and subsequent years are increased by 3% (see Table 1).

In addition, it is estimated that funding would be needed to purchase contractual treatment services for juveniles under intensive supervision. Funding is calculated using an average contract price of \$100 per juvenile times the 1,526 juveniles to be served. The estimated 1995-96 cost would be \$152,600 and is increased by 3% for subsequent years.

ALTERNATIVE 2 -- REGULAR SUPERVISION

Alternative 2 is based on need for 38 court counselors for regular supervision (caseload average of 40). The estimated costs first year cost, with an effective legislation date of October 1, 1995, would be \$1,083,000 (at a nine-month position cost of \$28,500, including \$2,758

in non-recurring costs per position). Not including non-recurring costs, the continuation costs for these counselors for subsequent years would be \$1,339,196 (at \$35,242 per counselor position); however, costs for 1995-96 and subsequent years are increased by 3% (see Table 2). This level of funding would provide minimal supervision for the 1,526 juveniles added under this bill.

SOURCES OF DATA: Administrative Office of the Courts

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION

733-4910

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DATE:

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