

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Session 2005

Legislative Fiscal Note

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 146 (First Edition)

SHORT TITLE: Legislative Assistant Status.

SPONSOR(S): Representative Miller

FISCAL IMPACT					
	Yes (X)	No ()	No Estimate Available ()		
	<u>FY 2005-06</u>	<u>FY 2006-07</u>	<u>FY 2007-08</u>	<u>FY 2008-09</u>	<u>FY 2009-10</u>
REVENUES:					
EXPENDITURES:	\$1.51m	\$886,924	\$1.55m	\$906,827	\$1.57m
POSITIONS (cumulative):					
PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) & PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:	NC General Assembly				
EFFECTIVE DATE:	When the legislation becomes law.				

BILL SUMMARY: This legislation provides one full time Legislative Assistant on either a permanent or temporary basis for each member of the General Assembly.

Source: Bill Digest H.B. 146 (02/09/2000).

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY: Section 1 of the bill amends Article 7 of Chapter 120 to add a new section, 120-32.6, that would entitle each member of the General Assembly during the entire term of office to have one full time legislative assistant either employed on a temporary or permanent basis to work 40 hours per week.

The primary influence in developing the General Assembly's budget is length of session. The budget for the first year of the biennium includes funding requirements for the short session and the second year of the biennium for the long session. Based upon the experience with session length the past few years, annual budgets for the General Assembly during the 2005-07 Biennium include costs through mid-August for both sessions. This provides funding that supports a 14-week short session and a 30-week long session. The result is a 38-week interim during fiscal years that budget for short sessions, e.g. FY 05-06, FY 07-08, and FY 09-10, etc. Likewise, there is a 22-week interim during fiscal years that budget for long sessions, e.g. FY 06-07 and FY 08-09, etc.

Although the number may vary, there are currently 192 support positions employed to assist members in the operation and organization of their offices. The 192 positions are divided among five (5) classifications: Administrative Assistant, Legislative Assistant, Committee Assistant, Research Assistant, and Office Assistant. Administrative Assistants are permanent, twelve-month salaried positions. The remaining positions are temporary and employed 5 days per week during sessions. However during the interims, funding for temporary positions is budgeted for 3 days per week.

This legislation would not affect the work schedules of or funding budgeted for Administrative Assistant positions. However, it would affect positions in the temporary classifications, as the work schedule in the interim would change for these positions. Of the 192 positions, there are 41 Administrative Assistant positions employed on a full time permanent basis that work for 34 members of the House and Senate. To provide support for other members during the interim, the practice has been to assign a temporary position to manage the work of several members. As presented, the legislation would ensure at least one full time position employed 40 hours per week for all members during the entire term of office. At this time, there are 136 members who would require full time support positions. Therefore, the cost associated with the legislation is the amount required to budget an additional two days a week during the interim for positions in the temporary classifications. Incremental costs would include funding required for salary with corresponding adjustments for retirement, social security, and longevity. Additionally, to keep pace with the salary adjustments authorized by the General Assembly in recent sessions, a 2% increase is factored each year, as this has been the annual percentage of salary adjustment for State employees. As a result, an appropriation would be required to provide the following annual increases in the General Assembly's budget: \$1,519,083 -- FY 05-06; \$886,924 -- FY 06-07; \$1,552,877 -- FY 07-08; \$906,827 -- FY 08-09; and \$1,576,098 -- FY 09-10.

SOURCES OF DATA: NC General Assembly

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

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