

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Kellie Warren, Chairperson  
Senate Committee on Judiciary  
300 SW 10th Avenue, Room 346-S  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Senator Warren:

**SUBJECT:** Fiscal Note for SB 156 by Senate Committee on Judiciary

In accordance with KSA 75-3715a, the following fiscal note concerning SB 156 is respectfully submitted to your committee.

SB 156 would create the crime of unlawful use of a laser pointer. The bill would define unlawful use as knowingly directing light from a laser pointer at a law enforcement officer while engaged in the performance of their duties, or at an aircraft in flight or its flight path.

Unlawful use of a laser pointer directed at a law enforcement officer would be classified as a Class A person misdemeanor, while unlawful use directed at an aircraft would be classified as a severity level 9, person felony. However, the provisions would not apply to individuals authorized by an aircraft manufacturer or the Federal Aviation Administration for research or testing, members of the Department of Defense or Homeland Security acting in an official capacity, or individuals using a laser emergency signaling device for distress purposes. The bill would also specify that a person convicted under this section may be prosecuted for assault or battery. The bill would take effect on July 1, 2025.

The Board of Indigents Defense Services indicates that the bill would increase agency expenditures on legal counsel and support staff by unknown amounts. The Board estimates that on average, a severity level 9, nonperson felony case requires 35 hours of direct work by an attorney to provide constitutionally adequate representation. Based on the rates of \$83.36 per hour for public defenders and \$125 per hour for assigned counsel, each new severity level 9, nonperson felony case brought to the agency would result in State General Fund expenditures of \$2,918 to \$4,375. The Board indicates that it may require 1.00 new FTE attorney position and possibly

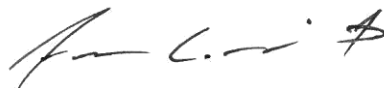
additional support staff depending on the number of new cases brought to the agency under the provisions of the bill.

The Sentencing Commission indicates that the bill has the potential to increase prison admissions and the number of prison beds needed; however, an exact estimate of this effect cannot be determined. The Department of Corrections indicates that the bill has the potential to increase agency operating expenditures depending on its effect on prison admissions and beds.

The Judiciary indicates that the bill has the potential to increase the number of cases filed in district courts. This may increase agency operating expenditures due to the additional time spent by district court judicial and nonjudicial personnel in processing, researching, and hearing cases. However, the Judiciary is unable to calculate an exact estimate of this effect. The bill has the potential to increase the collection of docket fees, fines, and supervision fees, which are deposited in the State General Fund; however, the amount of additional collections is unknown. Any fiscal effect associated with SB 156 is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

The League of Kansas Municipalities indicates that the bill has the potential to increase city government expenditures on legal proceedings. The Kansas Association of Counties indicates that the bill would have a negligible fiscal effect on counties.

Sincerely,



Adam C. Proffitt  
Director of the Budget

cc: Trisha Morrow, Judiciary  
Heather Cessna, Board of Indigents Defense Services  
Jennifer King, Department of Corrections  
Scott Schultz, Kansas Sentencing Commission  
Jay Hall, Kansas Association of Counties  
Wendi Stark, League of Kansas Municipalities