

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 4547H.011
 Bill No.: HB 2760
 Subject: Religion; Governor and Lt. Governor; Political Subdivisions
 Type: Original
 Date: February 6, 2026

Bill Summary: This proposal establishes the "PRAISE Act", prohibiting the closure of places of worship during an emergency.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Revenue*	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

*Oversight notes litigation exposure as described by OA could apply to the General Revenue Fund. It is assumed unknown costs could exceed \$250,000 annually.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
State Legal Expense (1692)*/**	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other State Funds**	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)
Colleges and Universities**	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)
Total Estimated Net Effect on Other State Funds	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

*Transfer-In and expenses net to zero.

**Oversight notes litigation exposure as described by OA could apply to the State Legal Expense fund, various other state funds and Colleges and Universities. It is assumed unknown costs could exceed \$250,000 annually.

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Federal Funds*	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

*Oversight assumes the fiscal impact to federal funds could reach the \$250,000 threshold.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

- Estimated Net Effect (expenditures or reduced revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.
- Estimated Net Effect (savings or increased revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Local Government*	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

*Oversight notes litigation exposure as described by OA could apply to the General Revenue Fund. It is assumed unknown costs could exceed \$250,000 annually.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

§1.810 – Protecting Religious Assembly in States of Emergency (PRAISE) Act

Officials from the **Office of Administration (OA)** state this provision has the potential to increase costs to the state Legal Expense Fund (LEF) for actions alleging violation of this provision against a state employee in connection with their official duties on behalf of the state or against another person covered by the LEF, due to the addition of an enforceable right under this section. This change would be subject to judicial construction; therefore, the cost impact to the state is unknown.

Oversight does not have any information contrary to that provided by OA. Therefore, Oversight will reflect OA's potential unknown impact for fiscal note purposes to the State Legal Expense Fund. Oversight notes the Legal Expense Fund is funded by the General Revenue Fund as well as other state funds. Oversight notes this possible litigation exposure as described by OA could also apply to colleges and universities, federal funds, as well as local political subdivisions. Oversight will assume unknown costs could exceed \$250,000 annually.

Officials from the **Office of Attorney General (AGO)** assumed any potential litigation costs arising from this proposal can be absorbed with existing resources. The AGO may seek additional appropriations if the proposal results in a significant increase in litigation or investigation costs.

Oversight does not have any information to the contrary. Therefore, Oversight assumes the AGO will be able to perform any additional duties required by this proposal with current staff and resources and will reflect no fiscal impact to the AGO for fiscal note purposes.

Officials from the **Office of the State Courts Administrator, Department of Health and Senior Services, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Public Safety (Fire Safety, Office of the Director, State Emergency Management Agency), Office of the Governor, Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Transportation, Missouri National Guard, City of Kansas City and City of O'Fallon** each assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their respective organizations. **Oversight** does not have any information to the contrary. Therefore, Oversight will reflect a zero impact in the fiscal note for these agencies.

Oversight only reflects the responses that we have received from state agencies and political subdivisions; however, other cities and counties were requested to respond to this proposed legislation but did not. Upon the receipt of additional responses, Oversight will review to determine if an updated fiscal note should be prepared and seek the necessary approval to publish a new fiscal note. A general listing of political subdivisions included in our database is available upon request.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
GENERAL REVENUE			
<u>Transfer Out – To the State Legal Expense Fund – OA (§1.810) Potential increase in litigation p.3</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
STATE LEGAL EXPENSE FUND (1692)			
<u>Transfer In - from General Revenue and other State and Federal funds p.3</u>	\$0 or Unknown	\$0 or Unknown	\$0 or Unknown
<u>Transfer Out – OA (§1.810) Potential increase in litigation p.3</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON STATE LEGAL EXPENSE FUND	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
OTHER STATE FUNDS			
<u>Cost – To the State Legal Expense Fund – OA (§1.810) Potential increase in litigation p.3</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES			
<u>Cost – (§1.810) Potential increase in litigation p.3</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
FEDERAL FUNDS			
<u>Cost</u> - (\$1.810) Potential increase in litigation	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT TO FEDERAL FUNDS	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS			
<u>Cost</u> - (\$1.810) Potential increase in litigation p.3	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>	\$0 or <u>(Unknown)</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

No direct fiscal impact on small businesses would be expected as a result of this proposal.

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes the "Protecting Religious Assembly in States of Emergency (PRAISE) Act".

The bill specifies that during a state of emergency declared by the Governor or through orders issued by the Department of Health and Senior Services regarding infectious, contagious, communicable, or dangerous diseases, neither the State nor any political subdivision can impose restrictions on a religious house of worship with the intent to make, or the effect of making, religious services impractical. Such orders cannot prohibit religious services that are held on private property.

An exception is made for emergency evacuation orders that apply generally to the area, but once the imminent danger has passed, religious services will be allowed to resume.

If the State or any of its political subdivisions impose restrictions on religious houses of worship during an emergency, affected religious houses of worship can bring a civil action for relief. Relief sought can include injunctive orders, compensatory damages, nominal damages, declaration of violation, and punitive damages.

This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Office of Administration
Attorney General's Office
Department of Health and Senior Services
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Public Safety
 Fire Safety
 Office of the Director
 State Emergency Management Agency
Office of the Governor
Missouri Department of Conservation
Missouri Department of Transportation
Missouri National Guard
City of Kansas City
City of O'Fallon

Julie Morff
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