

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 5839H.011
 Bill No.: HB 2832
 Subject: Department of Corrections; Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Councils;
 Prisons and Jails
 Type: Original
 Date: February 25, 2026

Bill Summary: This proposal establishes the "Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman".

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Revenue*	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)

*Oversight notes the Office of State Corrections Ombudsperson would require an unknown number of employees and office space to fulfil the duties outlined in the legislation as well as a significant fiscal and operational impact to the department in the tracking and reporting of information currently not captured that may be requested.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS

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

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)

FUND AFFECTED	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Revenue	Unknown FTE	Unknown FTE	Unknown FTE
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	Unknown FTE	Unknown FTE	Unknown FTE

- 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	\$0	\$0

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

§§218.010, 218.015, 218.020, 218.025, 218.030, 218.035, 218.040, 218.045, 218.050, 218.055, 218.060, and 218.065 – Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman

Officials from the **Department of Corrections (DOC)** state this proposal establishes the “Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman.”

Section 218.015 is created, in which it establishes the Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman to assure adequacy of care received by inmates and to improve quality of life experienced by them. It will have the authority to provide information to incarcerated people, correctional staff, family members of the incarcerated and staff; monitor conditions in correctional centers and assess department’s compliance with applicable federal, state, and local rules, regulations and policies; establish a statewide uniform reporting system to collect and analyze data; promulgate reasonable rules and regulations for the administration and enforcement of this chapter; gather stakeholder input; inspect each department facility; investigate incidents within the department facilities either on the office’s own initiative or pursuant to a complaint; and publicly issue periodic facility inspection reports, annual report with recommendations and summary of data and recommendations arising from any complaints investigated.

There is the potential for significant fiscal and operational impact to the department in the tracking and reporting of information currently not captured that may be requested, as well as time needed to respond to inquiries made by the Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman. There is no way of knowing to what extent documentation and reporting would be requested, and therefore exactly how many additional FTE will be required to fulfill these duties. Therefore, the department estimates an unknown fiscal cost to this legislation. DOC estimates this impact could exceed \$250,000.

Oversight does not have any information contrary to that provided by DOC. Therefore, Oversight will reflect DOC’s (unknown, greater than \$250,000) impact for the tracking and reporting of information as well as time needed to respond to inquiries made by the Independent Office of Corrections and Transparency.

Officials from the **Office of Administration** defer to the **Department of Corrections** for the potential fiscal impact of this proposal.

In response to similar legislation, HB 1616 (2026), officials from the **Office of Administration (OA)** stated that based on language in Chapter 218, FMDC assumes there will be an impact for the office space required for the ombudsperson position. Based on 250 square feet at \$21/sq ft and janitorial at \$2.47/ sq ft and utilities at \$2.80/ sq ft, OA/FMDC estimates the cost of the office space to be \$6,567.50 in FY27.

Oversight assumes based on the provisions of the proposal, that the Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman would require two (2) employees and office space to fulfil the duties outlined in the legislation. Therefore, Oversight will reflect an unknown cost greater than \$250,000 which includes FTE, fringe benefits, and E/E associated with this proposal.

Officials from the **Missouri Senate (SEN)** anticipate a negative fiscal impact to reimburse two senators for travel to Corrections Oversight Committee meetings.

The SEN assumes meetings will be held in Jefferson City during the interim. The average of the total round trip miles for current sitting senators is 255 miles and the current mileage rate, as set by the Office of Administration is \$0.70 cents per mile. Therefore, the SEN estimates a total cost for senator mileage of approximately \$357. The SEN assumes no fiscal responsibility for the other committee members.

Oversight does not have any information to the contrary. Oversight assumes the SEN can absorb the minimal fiscal impact for this proposal within existing funding levels and will reflect no fiscal impact for this agency.

Officials from the **Missouri House of Representatives (MHR)** assume no fiscal impact. The MHR will absorb any reasonable expenses of their members serving on the committee.

Officials from the **Office of the Governor (GOV)** state this bill adds to the Governor's current load of appointment duties. Individually, additional requirements should not fiscally impact the Office of the Governor. However, the cumulative impact of additional appointment duties across all enacted legislation may require additional resources for the Office of the Governor.

In response to similar legislation, HB 1616 (2026), 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 **Department of Mental Health, City of Kansas City, Phelps County Sheriff, Kansas City Police Department, Branson Police Department, and St. Louis County Police Department** 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, counties, and local law enforcement 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>Cost – DOC (§§218.010-218.065)</u> Tracking and reporting of information; respond to inquiries p.3	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)
<u>Cost – Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman (§§218.010- 218.065) FTE, fringe benefits, E/E p.4</u>	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$250,000)
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)	(Unknown, greater than \$500,000)

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2027 (10 Mo.)	FY 2028	FY 2029
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

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

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS OMBUDSMAN

This bill establishes the "Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman". The Office will consist of an inspection section and a complaints investigation section.

The Office will have the authority to:

- (1) Provide information regarding the rights of inmates;
- (2) Monitor conditions of confinement and assess department compliance with State and Federal rules and regulations;
- (3) Provide technical assistance to support inmate self advocacy;

- (4) Assist local governments in the creation of jail oversight bodies;
- (5) Establish a statewide uniform reporting system to collect and analyze data related to complaints received by the Department of Corrections (DOC);
- (6) Establish procedures to gather stakeholder input into the Office's activities and priorities including a 30-day period for receipt of and office response to public comment;
- (7) Inspect each DOC facility at least once every three years, and each maximum security facility and each facility where the Office has found cause for more frequent inspection or monitoring at least once per year; and
- (8) Publicly issue periodic inspection reports and an annual report with recommendations.

Staff members and contractors of the Office are prohibited from being, or having a family member who is, a current inmate, employee, or contractor of the DOC, or a victim of any person in the DOC's custody.

The bill also establishes a "Corrections Oversight Committee". Membership includes:

- (1) Two members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem and who are not members of the same political party;
- (2) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker and who are not of the same political party; and
- (3) Several members, as specified in the bill, who are appointed by the Governor.

Term length of membership is provided in the bill.

The Committee members will elect the Ombudsman after holding a public hearing, as provided in the bill. The Committee must hold at least one public hearing each year to discuss the Office's inspections, findings, reports, and recommendations. The Committee must also meet quarterly to discuss findings of the Office as the Committee determines relevant.

The Committee can, in its discretion, issue findings, recommendations, and policy and legislative proposals. The Committee will be given the same access to facilities, records, and people within facilities as the Office receives. The Committee will have the power to subpoena DOC records, employees, or contractors. Accompanied by the Office, the Committee must visit two different correctional facilities during each calendar year.

The Office will have reasonable access, upon demand, to all DOC facilities. It will have the opportunity to interview any inmate, employee, or contractor of the DOC. It will also have the power to inspect and copy all relevant records or documents in possession of the DOC that the Office considers necessary. The Office will have the power to subpoena DOC records, employees, or contractors.

Correspondence with the Office will be confidential. The Office will establish rules and procedures for confidentiality.

The Office must periodically inspect each DOC facility. Inspections will include assessments of DOC policies, procedures and conditions, as provided in the bill. Upon completion of an inspection, the Office will produce a public report describing its findings. Contents of the report are provided in the bill. The DOC must respond to each inspection report in writing and create corrective action plans to address problems flagged in the reports.

The Office can initiate an investigation on its own initiative or based on a complaint from an inmate, an inmate's representative, a family member, or a DOC employee or contractor. The Office can not levy fees for its services and can refer the complaint to appropriate resources or State or Federal agencies. At the conclusion of an investigation of a complaint, the Office will render a decision on the complaint and communicate the decision to the inmate, if applicable, and the DOC. The Office may take certain actions based on the conclusions reached in an investigation, as described in the bill. Retaliation against a complainant by DOC employees and contractors is prohibited.

By December 31st of each year, the Office will produce an annual report to be available to the public and delivered to the Governor and certain members of the General Assembly. Contents of the annual report are provided in the bill.

The Office will have the same access to jails and detention centers as to correctional facilities for the purpose of investigating deaths in those facilities.

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

Attorney General's Office
Department of Corrections
Department of Mental Health
Missouri House of Representatives
Office of Administration
Office of the Governor
Missouri Senate
City of Kansas City
Phelps County Sheriff

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Kansas City Police Department
Branson Police Department
St. Louis County Police Department



Julie Morff
Director
February 25, 2026



Jessica Harris
Assistant Director
February 25, 2026