

Statement of Estimated State Revenue Impact

Date: April 16, 2013

Bill Number: H.B. 3568

Authors: Weeks

Committee Requesting Impact: Judiciary

Bill Summary

A bill to amend Section 16-13-385, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, relating to altering, tampering with, or bypassing electric, gas, or water meters, Section 58-7-60, relating to the unlawful appropriation of gas, and section 58-7-70, relating to the wrongful use of gas and interference with gas meters, all so as to restructure the penalties and provide graduated penalties for violations of the statutes.

REVENUE IMPACT ^{1/}

This bill is not expected to have an impact on General Fund or local revenues in FY 2013-14.

Explanation

This bill proposes to amend Sections 16-13-385, 58-7-60 and 58-7-70 by restructuring the penalties associated with altering, tampering with or bypassing electric, gas or water meters. If this bill is approved, third and subsequent offenses would be treated as a felony, while first and second offenses remain a misdemeanor. Fines will vary and will be dependent on the offense and type of violation.

Based on information obtained from a survey of utility service providers in the State, a vast number of warrants are issued annually for violations associated with altering, tampering with or bypassing electric, gas or water meters. However, these violations are considered a low level crime and most cases are settled out of court. Additionally, information obtained from the SC General Sessions Court System shows that only four cases with the same type of violations made it to the court process in CY2012. Of these four cases, three received service time, while only one was placed with a fee. Therefore, we expect no impact on General Fund or local revenues in FY 2013-14.

This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.



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^{1/} This statement meets the requirement of Section 27-71 for a state revenue impact by the BEA, or Section 27-76 for a local revenue impact or Section 6-1-85(B) for an estimate of the shift in local property tax incidence by the Office of Economic Research.