



**SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE**  
**STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT**  
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**Bill Number:** S. 1002 Introduced on January 14, 2020  
**Author:** Rankin  
**Subject:** Jury Voir Dire  
**Requestor:** Senate Judiciary  
**RFA Analyst(s):** Gardner  
**Impact Date:** February 7, 2020

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### **Fiscal Impact Summary**

The Judicial Department indicates that responsibilities required by this bill will be handled within their current appropriations and authorizations.

### **Explanation of Fiscal Impact**

#### **Introduced on January 14, 2020**

##### **State Expenditure**

This bill would change how a jury is selected in common pleas courts and in equity cases in the courts. Among other things, the parties must prepare and exchange proposed voir dire questions five days prior to selection. The bill also gives the judge the discretion to determine the number of jurors in the jury panel rather than prescribing the number of people to serve on the panel. Each party is required to ask its approved questions and must be given at least thirty minutes to do so, though the judge may extend the time limit under certain conditions. There currently is no minimum time that must be provided for the parties to ask the questions. The bill prohibits questions on matters such as political views and religious beliefs. Once all initial questions have been asked, the plaintiff will proceed with a peremptory challenge, followed by the defendant, and the two shall alternate challenges until all challenges have been exhausted. Remaining jurors will be impaneled and sworn as the trial jury. If passed, the bill will take effect on January 1, 2021.

**Judicial Department.** The department indicates that implementation of the bill would lengthen the jury selection process since there are additional issues to consider, which would impact the common pleas court dockets. However, there is no data with which to predict the number of hearings that may be impacted nor the amount of extra time that may be required to conduct the hearings. The department expects to absorb any costs associated with lengthened case time using General Funds.

##### **State Revenue**

N/A

##### **Local Expenditure and Local Revenue**

N/A

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank A. Rainwater".

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Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director