MISSOURI STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE
REVISED FISCAL NOTE (26-HCS HJR 3)

Subject

House Committee Substitute for House Joint Resolution No. 3 (Received September 15, 2025)

Date

February 23, 2026

Description

This proposal would amend Article III of the Missouri Constitution.

The amendment is to be voted on in November 2026.

Public comments and other input

The State Auditor's office requested input from the **Attorney General's Office**, the **Department of Agriculture**, the **Department of Commerce and Insurance**, the **Department of Conservation**, the **Department of Corrections**, the **Department of Economic Development**, the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**, the **Department of Health and Senior Services**, the **Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development**, the **Department of Labor and Industrial Relations**, the **Department of Mental Health**, the **Department of National Guard**, the **Department of Natural Resources**, the **Department of Public Safety**, the **Department of Revenue**, the **Department of Social Services**, the **Department of Transportation**, the **Governor's Office**, the **Missouri House of Representatives**, the **Missouri Senate**, the **Office of Administration**, the **Office of State Courts Administrator**, the **Office of the State Public Defender**, the **Secretary of State's Office**, the **State Treasurer's Office**, **Adair County**, **Andrew County**, **Atchison County**, **Audrain County**, **Barry County**, **Barton County**, **Bates County**, **Benton County**, **Bollinger County**, **Boone County**, **Buchanan County**, **Butler County**, **Caldwell County**, **Callaway County**, **Camden County**, **Cape Girardeau County**, **Carroll County**, **Carter County**, **Cass County**, **Cedar County**, **Chariton County**, **Christian County**, **Clark County**, **Clay County**, **Clinton County**, **Cole County**, **Cooper County**, **Crawford County**, **Dade County**, **Dallas County**, **Daviess County**, **DeKalb County**, **Dent County**, **Douglas County**, **Dunklin County**, **Franklin County**, **Gasconade County**, **Gentry County**, **Greene County**, **Grundy County**, **Harrison County**, **Henry County**, **Hickory County**, **Holt County**, **Howard County**, **Howell County**, **Iron County**, **Jackson County**, **Jasper County**, **Jefferson County**, **Johnson County**, **Knox County**, **Laclede County**, **Lafayette County**, **Lawrence County**, **Lewis County**, **Lincoln County**, **Linn County**, **Livingston County**, **Macon County**, **Madison County**, **Maries County**, **Marion County**, **McDonald County**, **Mercer County**, **Miller County**, **Mississippi County**, **Moniteau County**, **Monroe County**, **Montgomery County**, **Morgan County**, **New Madrid County**, **Newton County**, **Nodaway County**, **Oregon County**, **Osage County**, **Ozark County**, **Pemiscot County**, **Perry County**, **Pettis County**, **Phelps County**, **Pike County**, **Platte County**, **Polk County**, **Pulaski County**, **Putnam County**, **Ralls County**, **Randolph County**, **Ray County**, **Reynolds County**, **Ripley County**, **Saline County**, **Schuyler County**, **Scotland County**, **Scott County**, **Shannon County**, **Shelby County**, **St. Charles County**, **St. Clair County**, **St. Francois County**, **St. Louis County**, **Ste. Genevieve County**, **Stoddard County**, **Stone County**, **Sullivan County**, **Taney County**, **Texas County**, **Vernon County**, **Warren County**, **Washington County**, **Wayne County**, **Webster County**, **Worth County**, **Wright County**, the **City of Cape Girardeau**, the **City of Columbia**, the **City of Jefferson City**, the **City of Joplin**, the **City of Kansas City**, the **City of Kirksville**, the **City of Mexico**, the **City of Raymore**, the **City of Springfield**, the **City of St. Joseph**, the **City of St. Louis**, the **City of Union**, the **City of Wentzville**, the **City of West Plains**, **Cape Girardeau 63 School District**, **Hannibal School District #60**, **Jennings School District**, **Malta Bend R-V School District**, **Mehlville School District**, **Wellsville-Middletown R-1 School District**, **Metropolitan Community College**, **St. Louis Community College**, **State Technical College of Missouri**, **University of Missouri**, and the **Missouri Ethics Commission**.

Assumptions

Officials from the **Attorney General's Office** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Agriculture** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Commerce and Insurance** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Conservation** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Corrections** indicated:

26-HCS HJR 3 creates the crime of petition signature fraud, punishable by imprisonment for up to one year or a fine of up to one thousand dollars or both. The proposed legislation does not specify whether the penalty will be classified as a misdemeanor or a felony. Should the penalty be a misdemeanor, and as misdemeanors fall outside the purview of DOC, there would be no impact to DOC. Should the penalty be a class E felony, the impact is listed below. For each new nonviolent class E felony, the department estimates one person could be sentenced to prison and two to probation. The average sentence for a nonviolent class E felony offense is 3.4 years, of which 2.1 years will be served in prison with 1.4 years to first release. The remaining 1.3 years will be on parole. Probation sentences will be 3 years. The cumulative impact on the department is estimated to be 2 additional offenders in prison and 7 additional offenders on field supervision by FY 2028. As the proposed legislation does not list a misdemeanor or felony level, the fiscal impact is a cost of $0 - $21,817.

FISCAL ESTIMATE WORKSHEET **FISCAL NOTE:** 26-HCS HJR 3
OVERSIGHT DIVISION (573)751-4143 **BILL NO:**
FAX (573)751-7681

Instructions

SUMMARY OF FISCAL IMPACT

Type of Fiscal Note Response: Original

Agency:	DOC - Corrections	Date:	9/22/2025
Division:		Telephone:	573-526-7844
Preparer:	Susan Pulliam	E-Mail Address:	susan.pulliam@doc.mo.gov
Preparer's Signature:		No Impact on Agency:	
Approval Signature:	Trevor Foley	No Local Fiscal Impact:	
Oversight Analyst:			

Note: if both of the "no impact" lines are checked, you only need to complete the "Summary of Fiscal Impact" and "Overview-Questions" worksheets.
Create and complete separate worksheets for each state fund affected.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON STATE FUNDS

Fund Affected	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
General Revenue	($0 - $8,737)	($0 - $21,389)	($0 - $21,817)
Total Estimated Net Effect on All State Funds	**($0 - $8,737)**	**($0 - $21,389)**	**($0 - $21,817)**

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS

Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0
Total Estimated Net Effect on All Federal Funds	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS

Total Estimated Net Effect on All Local Funds	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

FISCAL ESTIMATE WORKSHEET

FISCAL NOTE: 26-HCS HJR 3

BILL NO: 0

Instructions | Fiscal Note Worksheet | Instructions | Instructions

	# to/from Prison	Cost per year	Total Cost of Prison (includes 2% inflation per year starting in year 2)		Change in number of Probation and Parole Officers	Probation and Parole Officer II Cost per year (includes PS, fringe, E&E and inflation)	Grand Total Prison and Probation	# of Offenders to/from Probation & Parole
Year 1 (10 months)	1	($10,485)	($8,737)		0	$0	($8,737)	2
Year 2 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($21,389)		0	$0	($21,389)	4
Year 3 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($21,817)		0	$0	($21,817)	7
Year 4 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($22,254)		0	$0	($22,254)	7
Year 5 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($22,699)		0	$0	($22,699)	7
Year 6 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($23,153)		0	$0	($23,153)	7
Year 7 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($23,616)		0	$0	($23,616)	7
Year 8 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($24,088)		0	$0	($24,088)	7
Year 9 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($24,570)		0	$0	($24,570)	7
Year 10 (includes 2% inflation)	2	($10,485)	($25,061)		0	$0	($25,061)	7

Officials from the **Department of Economic Development** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Health and Senior Services** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Labor and Industrial Relations** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Mental Health** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of National Guard** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Natural Resources** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Public Safety** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Revenue** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Social Services** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Department of Transportation** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Governor's Office** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Missouri House of Representatives** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Missouri Senate** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Office of Administration** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Office of State Courts Administrator** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Office of the State Public Defender** indicated:

By creating the new offense of petition signature fraud, an unclassified misdemeanor, if an individual is accused of this crime, is indigent and applies for a Public Defender, State resources will need to be expended to represent that individual. The new charge contemplated by this Amendment to the Constitution would take approximately twenty-two hours of SPD work for reasonably effective representation. If one hundred cases were filed under this section in a fiscal year, representation would result in a need for an additional attorney. Because the number of cases that will be filed under this statute is unknown, the exact additional number of attorneys necessary is unknown. Each case would also result in unknown increased costs in the need for core staff, travel and litigation expenses. However, if the charge was classified as a class D misdemeanor no jail time would be authorized and the cases would not qualify for SPD representation.

Officials from the **Secretary of State's Office** indicated: *****

Officials from the Secretary of State's Office indicated their office is required to pay for publishing in local newspapers the full text of each statewide ballot measure as directed by Article XII, Section 2(b) of the Missouri Constitution and Sections 116.230–116.290, RSMo. The office is provided with core funding to handle a certain amount of normal activity resulting from each year's legislative session.

Funding for this item is adjusted each year depending upon the election cycle, with $1.3 million historically appropriated in odd-numbered fiscal years and $100,000 appropriated in even-numbered fiscal years. Through FY 2013, the appropriation had historically been estimated because the final cost depends upon the number of ballot measures approved by the General Assembly and the initiative petitions certified for the ballot. In FY 2015, the General Assembly changed the appropriation so that it was no longer estimated.

The actual expenditures vary widely depending on the number and length of ballot measures. For example, in 2016, publishing six measures cost $2,341,601.11; in 2018, publishing eight measures cost $5,826,604.87; in 2020, three measures cost $1,276,613.66; in 2022, four measures cost $3,014,063.75; and in 2024, eight measures cost $2,472,362.53. Total expenditures since 2004 exceed $14.9 million for 60 ballot measures. Importantly, that $14.9 million has largely been spent since 2016, covering only 29 measures at an average cost of approximately $515,000 per measure.

Cost differences from year to year are driven not only by the number of measures but also by the length of ballot text. In 2018, for instance, costs were more than double those of 2024 despite both years having eight measures. The difference is explained by one unusually lengthy petition: a marijuana measure with approximately 50 pages of ballot text (letter size), which equated to roughly 40 legal-sized pages—far longer than a typical petition.

The office contracts placement of these notices through the Missouri Press Service, which ensures distribution across eligible newspapers statewide. In 2024, for example, 160 newspapers carried the full ballot language.

Because these publishing requirements are mandatory, the Secretary of State's Office must have full appropriation authority to meet the publishing obligations regardless of the number of measures in a given cycle. In addition to statutory ballot measures, the office must also accommodate referendum petitions, which increase the volume of ballot language requiring publication. With recent trends showing longer ballot language and multiple initiative or referendum petitions filed in the same cycle, costs are expected to rise substantially.

To reflect rising paper, printing, and distribution costs, increased advertising placement rates, longer ballot language, and the likelihood of referendum-driven measures, the Secretary of State's Office requests and budgets $10,000,000 to ensure sufficient funding is available to meet its constitutional obligations to publish ballot language.

Officials from **Carter County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Clay County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Greene County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Madison County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Pike County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Schuyler County** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **City of Kansas City** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **City of St. Louis** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **City of Wentzville** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **Metropolitan Community College** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **St. Louis Community College** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from **University of Missouri** indicated no fiscal impact.

Officials from the **Missouri Ethics Commission** indicated no fiscal impact.

The State Auditor's office did not receive a response from the **State Treasurer's Office**, **Adair County**, **Andrew County**, **Atchison County**, **Audrain County**, **Barry County**, **Barton County**, **Bates County**, **Benton County**, **Bollinger County**, **Boone County**, **Buchanan County**, **Butler County**, **Caldwell County**, **Callaway County**, **Camden County**, **Cape Girardeau County**, **Carroll County**, **Cass County**, **Cedar County**, **Chariton County**, **Christian County**, **Clark County**, **Clinton County**, **Cole County**, **Cooper County**, **Crawford County**, **Dade County**, **Dallas County**, **Daviess County**, **DeKalb County**, **Dent County**, **Douglas County**, **Dunklin County**, **Franklin County**, **Gasconade County**, **Gentry County**, **Grundy County**, **Harrison County**, **Henry County**, **Hickory County**, **Holt County**, **Howard County**, **Howell County**, **Iron County**, **Jackson County**, **Jasper County**, **Jefferson County**, **Johnson County**, **Knox County**, **Laclede County**, **Lafayette County**, **Lawrence County**, **Lewis County**, **Lincoln County**, **Linn County**, **Livingston County**, **Macon County**, **Maries County**, **Marion County**, **McDonald County**, **Mercer County**, **Miller County**, **Mississippi County**, **Moniteau County**, **Monroe County**, **Montgomery County**, **Morgan County**, **New Madrid County**, **Newton County**, **Nodaway County**, **Oregon County**, **Osage County**, **Ozark County**, **Pemiscot County**, **Perry County**, **Pettis County**, **Phelps County**, **Platte County**, **Polk County**, **Pulaski County**, **Putnam County**, **Ralls County**, **Randolph County**, **Ray County**, **Reynolds County**, **Ripley County**, **Saline County**, **Scotland County**, **Scott County**, **Shannon County**, **Shelby County**, **St. Charles County**, **St. Clair County**, **St. Francois County**, **St. Louis County**, **Ste. Genevieve County**, **Stoddard County**, **Stone County**, **Sullivan County**, **Taney County**, **Texas County**, **Vernon County**, **Warren County**, **Washington County**, **Wayne County**, **Webster County**, **Worth County**, **Wright County**, the **City of Cape Girardeau**, the **City of Columbia**, the **City of Jefferson City**, the **City of Joplin**, the **City of Kirksville**, the **City of Mexico**, the **City of Raymore**, the **City of Springfield**, the **City of St. Joseph**, the **City of Union**, the **City of West Plains**, **Cape Girardeau 63 School District**, **Hannibal School District #60**, **Jennings School District**, **Malta Bend R-V School District**, **Mehlville School District**, **Wellsville-Middletown R-1 School District**, and **State Technical College of Missouri**.

* Explanation of Exclusion of Fiscal Note Information From the Fiscal Note Summary

The State Auditor's Office is excluding the response from the Office of the Secretary of State. The information provided does not address the provisions of HJR 3.

Fiscal Note Summary

The Department of Corrections estimates increased annual costs of up to $21,817. The Office of State Public Defender estimates an unknown fiscal impact. Other state governmental entities estimate no costs or savings. Local governmental entities estimate no costs or savings.