



DEPARTMENT OF AUDITS AND ACCOUNTS

270 Washington Street, S.W., Suite 4-114
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-8400

Russell W. Hinton
State Auditor
(404) 656-2174

April 13, 2007

Honorable James L. Whitehead, Sr., Chairman
Senate Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee
Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Room 319-B
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
House Bill 314 Substitute
(LC 29 2906S)

Dear Chairman Whitehead:

This bill adds certain reporting and registration requirements related to sexual offenders and the State Sexual Offender Registry. The bill would require sexual offenders to register with the sheriff of any county where such offender resides, is employed, or is attending an institution of higher education in lieu of only registering in the county of residence. It would also require the State Sexual Offender Registry to obtain palm prints from sexual offenders and to forward to the applicable county sheriff's office, 30 days prior to the offender's release, the sexual offender's fingerprints, palm prints, and photograph along with other specific information. Additionally, the bill would allow for certain elderly and disabled sexual offenders to petition the superior court to be released from certain residency requirements.

It is estimated that this bill would have minimal, if any, fiscal impact on the state. Information obtained from the Department of Human Resources (DHR), to which the Sexual Offender Registration Board is attached, indicates that no financial impact is expected as a result of this bill. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), which operates the Georgia Crime Information Center's Sex Offender Registry, does not expect a fiscal impact as a result of this substitute bill. GBI noted, however, that statutory changes made to the Sex Offender Registry in 2006 were estimated to cost \$80,000 but have not yet been funded.

An accurate assessment of the possible fiscal impact on local governments could not be obtained during the given timeframe. cursory feedback obtained from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) indicates that there may be a significant cost to local governments, potentially exceeding \$7 million statewide, to purchase equipment capable of reading and electronically storing palm prints. Consideration should be given to requesting that the state's Department of Community Affairs prepare a fiscal note in accordance with O.C.G.A. §28-5-49, which is contained in state legislation known as the "State and Local Government Partnership Act of 1995."

Respectfully,

/s/ Russell W. Hinton
State Auditor

/s/ Shelley C. Nickel, Director
Office of Planning and Budget