

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL MEMORANDUM

HB 643 - SB 579

April 16, 2019

SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL BILL: Removes law enforcement as a transportation option for individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, and serious emotional disturbances.

FISCAL IMPACT OF ORIGINAL BILL:

NOT SIGNIFICANT

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENT (008322): Deletes all language after the enacting clause. Creates a grant program through the Department of Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the Division of TennCare, to assist sheriffs required to transport persons to a hospital or treatment resource for emergency mental health transport under this section. Prohibits assistance from the grant program for emergency mental health transports where a physician, psychologist, or designated professional determines that the person can be transported by friends, neighbors, or other mental health professionals familiar with the person, relatives, or member of the clergy.

Authorizes a sheriff to contract with one or more third parties or other law enforcement agencies to transport persons to a hospital or treatment resource. Sheriffs may use grant funds to pay for the services. Authorizes hospitals or treatment resources to conduct an evaluation for admission through telehealth if such services are available and offered.

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

Increase State Expenditures – Exceeds \$1,000,000

Decrease Local Expenditures – Exceeds \$1,000,000

Assumptions for the bill as amended:

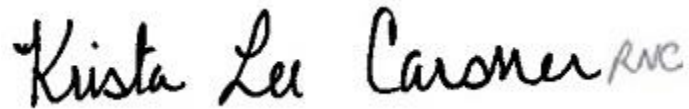
- The development and administration of the grant program will not result in a significant increase in state expenditures.

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- Currently, sheriffs provide these transportation services to Regional Mental Health Institutes (RMHIs) and private facilities and do not receive any reimbursement for such services.
- Based on information provided by the Tennessee Sheriffs' Association (TSA) that included 46 counties, sheriffs had at least 14,314 transports for a total cost of \$1,744,171 in 2018 that includes the cost for transport, personnel, and vehicle cost. Of the 14,314 total transports, 2,249 of these transports were to a state facility and 12,065 were to private facilities.
- It is assumed any grant program to provide assistance will need to be funded in an amount of at least \$1,000,000; therefore, the increase in state expenditures estimated to exceed \$1,000,000.
- Any state funds expended from the grant program will result in an equal decrease in local expenditures for the costs of transports estimated to exceed \$1,000,000.
- It is assumed local governments will not contract with third party providers unless the services are cost effective; therefore, it is assumed this will not significantly impact current local expenditures.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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