



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

SB 26-172: FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Hinrichsen; Kipp
Rep. Boesenecker; Paschal

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Fiscal note status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill adjusts the boundaries of the Front Range Passenger Rail District, creates residency requirements for the district board, and adjusts how ballot measures are brought by the district.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas starting in FY 2026-27, with future state impacts conditional upon additional district elections occurring:

- State Revenue
- State Expenditures
- TABOR Refunds
- Local Government

Appropriations. No appropriation is required. The Ballot Information Publication and Distribution Revolving Fund is continuously appropriated to the Legislative Department.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts**

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue (Cash Fund)	\$44,593	\$0
State Expenditures (Cash Fund)	\$44,593	\$0
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$44,593	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill makes adjustments to the boundaries and operations of the Front Range Passenger Rail District. Specifically, the bill:

- changes the boundaries of the Front Range Passenger Rail District to include municipalities and metropolitan districts listed in the bill, and any municipalities or metropolitan districts that elect to be included in the district;
- requires that board members appointed on or after July 1, 2026, reside within the district;
- allows the board to establish subdistricts; and,
- requires district elections (seeking voter approval of taxes, assessments, or bonds) to occur at the same time as the statewide general or a coordinated election, requires the district to provide the measure and required notice to voters for inclusion in the statewide ballot information booklet (Blue Book), and requires the district to reimburse the Legislative Department for publication costs.

Background

The [Front Range Passenger Rail District](#) was established by [Senate Bill 21-238](#) to implement an interconnected passenger rail system along the Interstate 25 corridor. The district is authorized to seek approval from voters to levy taxes, assessments, or bonds to fund the development, construction, and operation of the passenger rail system. The district is governed by a board of directors with 17 voting and 7 non-voting members.

Assumptions

The fiscal note assumes the district will refer one measure to the ballot in FY 2026-27. The actual timing of district ballot measures may vary, which would affect the amount and timing of state revenue and expenditures under the bill. Future-year impacts are expected to be rare, and will depend on whether or not the district or a subdistrict refers additional measures to voters.

State Revenue

The bill increases revenue to the Ballot Information Publication and Distribution Revolving Fund in the Legislative Department by \$44,593 in FY 2026-27 from district reimbursement for costs associated with printing ballot measures in the Blue Book. This revenue increase is subject to TABOR.

State Expenditures

Legislative Department

The bill increases expenditures in the Legislative Department by \$44,593 in FY 2026-27, paid from the Ballot Information Publication and Distribution Revolving Fund, to include a district ballot measure in the Blue Book. This cost assumes two pages are required for the ballot analysis and two pages are required for the text and title, which equates to four pages total. Based on the five-year average printing costs and number of current registered voters, these costs are estimated at \$11,148 per page, or \$44,593 total, in FY 2026-27.

TABOR Refunds

The bill is expected to increase the amount of state revenue required to be refunded to taxpayers by \$44,593 in FY 2026-27 and future years when the district refers a measure to voters that is included in the Blue Book. This estimate assumes the March 2026 LCS revenue forecast. A forecast of state revenue subject to TABOR is not available beyond FY 2027-28. Because TABOR refunds are paid from the General Fund, increased cash fund revenue will reduce the amount of General Fund available to spend or save in FY 2026-27 and any future years when the state is over its revenue limit.

Local Government

Front Range Passenger Rail District

The Front Range Passenger Rail District will have costs to reimburse the Legislative Department for ballot information booklet publication in FY 2026-27, if a measure is referred to voters. Changing the composition of the district will potentially impact future revenue and costs for the district; however, these cannot be estimated and will depend on future decisions by the district board and by voters.

If the subdistricts are created, the bill increases workload and expenditures for the new subdistrict to establish and operate a board. If additional taxes are approved by voters within a subdistrict, revenue will also increase. Similar to the impact for the district as a whole, subdistricts will have costs to reimburse the Legislative Department for ballot information booklet publication for any future measures referred to voters.

Other Local Governments

The bill impacts workload for certain local governments such as cities and counties to coordinate with the district, depending on whether the bill removes them from, or includes them in, the boundaries of the district. Similarly, local governments will have workload to interact and coordinate with any additional subdistricts that are formed.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties	Municipalities	Secretary of State
Legislative Council Staff	Regional Transportation District	Special District Association
Local Affairs		Transportation

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit the [General Assembly website](#).