



**Colorado  
Legislative  
Council  
Staff**

**SB17-154**

**FINAL  
FISCAL NOTE**

**FISCAL IMPACT:**  State  Local  Statutory Public Entity  Conditional  No Fiscal Impact

**Drafting Number:** LLS 17-0921  
**Prime Sponsor(s):** Sen. Gardner  
Rep. Wist

**Date:** September 1, 2017  
**Bill Status:** Signed into Law  
**Fiscal Analyst:** Erin Reynolds (303-866-4146)

**BILL TOPIC:** UNIFORM UNSWORN DECLARATIONS ACT INCLUDE DOMESTIC

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
<b>State Revenue</b> Cash Funds	Potential increase.	
<b>State Expenditures</b>	Minimal workload increase.	
<b>Appropriation Required:</b> None.		
<b>Future Year Impacts:</b> Ongoing minimal workload and potential revenue increase.		

**Summary of Legislation**

The bill modifies the state's Uniform Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act, which allows the use of foreign unsworn declarations in a variety of situations, to include domestic unsworn declarations, and limits the use of unsworn declarations to state courts.

**Background**

**Colorado Commission on Uniform State Laws.** This bill was recommended by the Colorado Commission on Uniform State Laws. The commission is charged with working with the national Uniform Law Commission (ULC) to promote uniformity in state laws where uniformity may be deemed desirable and practicable. This is achieved by developing proposed uniform legislation through the ULC that can be adopted by the various state legislatures. Colorado's commissioners are required to be attorneys admitted to practice law in Colorado. Members include six attorneys appointed or reappointed by joint resolution of the General Assembly; any Colorado citizen who is elected as a life member of the ULC (after twenty years of membership); and the Director of the Office of Legislative Legal Services, or the Director's designee. The Office of Legislative Legal Services provides assistance to the legislative members of the Colorado Commission in their efforts to enact legislation regarding uniform acts. House Bill 09-1190 established the state's Uniform Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act to harmonize state law with federal law, and was also recommended by the Colorado Commission on Uniform State Laws.

## **Comparable Crime**

Legislative Council Staff is required to include certain information in the fiscal note for any bill that creates a new crime, changes the classification of an existing crime, or changes an element of the existing crime that creates a new factual basis for the offense. House Bill 17-1028 expands the penalty of perjury to individuals making unsworn domestic declarations. In the past three years, there have been 16 first degree perjury cases and 119 second degree perjury cases; however, there have been no penalties for perjury issued under the Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act. First degree perjury is a class 4 felony punishable by 2 to 6 years in prison, \$2,000 to \$500,000 in fines, or both. Second degree perjury is a class 1 misdemeanor punishable by 6 to 18 months in jail, \$500 to \$5,000 in fines, or both.

## **State Revenue**

Beginning in FY 2017-18, this bill may increase state cash fund revenue by a minimal amount, credited to the Fines Collection Cash Fund in the Judicial Department. Because the courts have the discretion of incarceration, imposing a fine, or both, the precise impact to state revenue cannot be determined. However, based on no prior penalties being issued under the Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act, the fiscal note assumes that individuals making sworn statements under the penalty of perjury will tell the truth to avoid placing themselves in legal jeopardy. The bill may also increase state cash fund revenue from probation, court, and administrative fees.

## **State Expenditures**

Beginning in FY 2017-18, this bill may minimally increase workload for the Judicial Department and could increase workload and costs in the Department of Corrections.

**Judicial Department.** Workload may increase in the trial courts and probation division of the Judicial Department if there are additional perjury cases as a result of this bill. It is assumed this workload can be accomplished within existing appropriations. In the event indigent persons are charged with perjury, workload and costs for the Office of the State Public Defender and the Alternate Defense Counsel will also increase.

**Department of Corrections.** To the extent that this bill increases the number of persons sentenced to the DOC, costs will increase. Should additional convictions occur, the fiscal note assumes the DOC will request additional appropriations through the annual budget process.

## **Local Government Impact**

The bill may increase workload for district attorneys to prosecute any new felony or misdemeanor offenses under the bill. In addition, to the extent that this bill increases misdemeanor convictions and offenders are sentenced to jail, county costs will increase. Under current law, a court may sentence an offender to jail for a class 1 misdemeanor for a period of between 6 and 18 months. Because the courts have the discretion of incarceration or imposing a fine, the precise impact at the local level cannot be determined. The cost to house an offender in county jails varies from about \$53 to \$114 per day. The fiscal note assumes that the impact of this bill on counties will be minimal.

Any increase in misdemeanors will increase workload for the Denver County Court, which is managed and funded by the City and County of Denver. Probation services in the Denver County Courts may also experience a minimal increase in workload to supervise any persons convicted under the bill.

**Effective Date**

The bill was signed into law by the Governor on April 13, 2017, and became effective on August 9, 2017. It applies to conduct occurring on or after this date.

**State and Local Government Contacts**

County Clerks  
Law

Information Technology  
Secretary of State

Judicial