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Fiscal Note

Drafting Number:	LLS 24-0361	Date:	January 10, 2024
Prime Sponsors:	Sen. Roberts; Will Rep. McLachlan; Catlin	Bill Status:	Senate Agriculture
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Bill Topic: **AG & NATURAL RESOURCES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENT**

Summary of Fiscal Impact:	<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Government
	<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

The bill requires certain commission and board members to hold semi-annual public meetings with their constituents. It increases state expenditures beginning in FY 2024-25.

Appropriation Summary: For FY 2024-25, the bill requires appropriations of \$38,300 to various state agencies.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, as recommended by the Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 24-026

		Budget Year FY 2024-25	Out Year FY 2025-26
Revenue		-	-
Expenditures	General Fund	\$19,168	\$38,336
	Cash Funds	\$19,132	\$38,264
	Total Expenditures	\$38,300	\$76,600
Transfers		-	-
Other Budget Impacts	General Fund Reserve	\$2,875	\$5,750

Summary of Legislation

The bill requires the Governor-appointed members of the Parks and Wildlife Commission, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Colorado Agricultural Commission to hold two public, in-person meetings each year. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Agriculture (CDA) must track and report the meetings of board members and commissioners, and reimburse members for reasonable costs to conduct public meetings.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Natural Resources by a total of \$38,300 in FY 2024-25 and \$76,600 in FY 2025-26 and future years, paid from the General Fund, the Wildlife Cash Fund, and the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund. Expenditures are shown in Table 2 and detailed below.

Table 2
Expenditures Under SB 24-026

	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Department of Agriculture		
Travel Costs	\$10,568	\$21,136
Meeting Expenses	\$8,600	\$15,296
CDA Subtotal	\$19,168	\$38,336
Department of Natural Resources		
Travel Costs	\$16,632	\$33,264
Meeting Expenses	\$2,500	\$5,000
DNR Subtotal	\$19,132	\$38,264
Total	\$38,300	\$76,600

¹ Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Department of Agriculture. The Colorado Agriculture Commission includes five at-large members and four district representatives who are subject to the new public meeting requirements. Travel costs include hotel, mileage, and per diem for commissioners and the CDA staff who support the public meetings. Meeting expenses include room rental, refreshments, and other meeting materials.

The bill increases workload for CDA staff to coordinate and participate in meetings; this workload can be accomplished within existing appropriations. Commission expenses are paid from the General Fund.

Department of Natural Resources. The Parks and Wildlife Commission includes 11 members who are subject to the new public meeting requirements. Travel costs include hotel, mileage, and per diem for commissioners and the DNR staff who support the public meetings. Meeting expenses include room rental, refreshments, and other meeting materials. The estimates in Table 2 assume some meetings will coincide with other commission activities, resulting in some cost savings.

The Colorado Water Conservation Board includes nine members representing the state's nine basin roundtables. Although these board members are subject to the public meeting requirements, the fiscal note assumes that these meetings will coincide with regularly scheduled basin roundtable meetings and no change in appropriation is required.

The bill increases workload for DNR staff to coordinate and participate in meetings; this workload can be accomplished within existing appropriations. Expenses are paid from the cash funds, with 65 percent coming from the Wildlife Cash Fund and 35 percent from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund.

Other Budget Impacts

General Fund reserve. Under current law, an amount equal to 15 percent of General Fund appropriations must be set aside in the General Fund statutory reserve. Based on this fiscal note, the bill is expected to increase the amount of General Fund held in reserve by the amounts shown in Table 1, decreasing the amount of General Fund available for other purposes.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect January 1, 2025, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

For FY 2024-25, the bill requires the following appropriations:

- \$19,168 from the General Fund to the Department of Agriculture; and
- \$19,132 to the Department of Natural Resources, including \$12,436 from the Wildlife Cash Fund and \$6,696 from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund.

State and Local Government Contacts

Agriculture

Natural Resources