



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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August 8, 2017

Hon. Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Senate Bill 273 (Hill), as amended June 21, 2017 – Fiscal Impact Statement

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:

SB 273 impacts the way in which courts may determine if a marriage between minors or between one minor and an adult may proceed. Specifically, the bill requires the courts to do all of the following: Family Court Services shall separately interview the parties intending to marry and at least one parent or guardian of each party who is a minor; Family Court Services shall prepare a report with specified findings; if the findings lead to the conclusion that either party is a known or suspected victim of child abuse or neglect, that abuse or neglect shall be reported to county protective services. Additionally, the judicial officer, after reviewing the report of findings and recommendations from Family Court Services, shall separately interview in camera each of the parties to the marriage before making a final ruling.

Should SB 273 be enacted as amended on June 21, 2017, there are likely to be fiscal impacts on the courts. These costs are impacted by whether or not there are one or two minors seeking court permission to marry, as well as other variables. The range presented here assumes that there will be at least 20 applications to marry each year, and potentially as many as 30 applications, and that only one of the two parties seeking court permission to marry is a minor. We estimate the

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statewide financial burden on California's trial courts to range from an estimated \$150,000 to \$225,000. These costs could increase if both parties seeking court permission to marry are juveniles, or if there are more than 30 applications filed in the courts annually.

Fiscal Analysis – Assumptions

- A minimum of three (3) interviews per application by Family Court Services. Assuming only one party to the marriage application is a minor, interviews would be required of the two parties to the marriage plus at least one parent/guardian of the minor. Additional parents/guardians may be interviewed, and more people will be interviewed should both parties to the application be minors. Presumes 60 minutes per interview.
- A report by Family Court Services with specified findings. Presuming the information is properly captured in the interviews (in other words, no additional questions need to be answered), the preparation of a comprehensive report with specified findings, including reviews of interview notes, drafting, proof reading and approval, assumes 5 hours to finalize.
- The time of the judicial officer for reading the report, and conducting two 30-minute interviews of each of the parties.

Based on available court data related to marriages including at least one underage party currently available, there likely will be between 20 and 30 such marriages each year statewide. The protocols established under the authority of SB 273 will add an estimated 10 hours per under age marriage application at a conservative value of \$7,490 per case. At 20 cases per year with only one of the parties being underage, SB 273 could cost trial courts an estimated \$149,810 per year. At 30 annual marriages involving at least one underage party, the cost would be \$224,700.

Please note that the information contained in this analysis does not constitute a position in favor or against the proposed legislation by the Judicial Council of California, and sets forth only the considerations related to the fiscal burdens that are likely to be faced by the branch and branch entities should the bill be enacted into law.

Please contact Andi Liebenbaum at 916-323-3121 if you have questions about the information contained in this letter.

Sincerely,

Mailed on August 9, 2017

Cory T. Jaspersen,
Director, Governmental Affairs

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cc: Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee

Hon. Jerry Hill, Member of the Senate

Mr. Pedro Reyes, Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee

Mr. Allan Cooper, Fiscal Consultant, Assembly Republican Fiscal Office

Mr. Daniel Seeman, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of the Governor

Ms. Emma Jungwirth, Budget Analyst, Department of Finance

Mr. Martin Hoshino, Administrative Director, Judicial Council of California