



# DOAA

Georgia Department  
of Audits & Accounts

**Greg S. Griffin**  
State Auditor

February 19, 2026

Honorable Tyler Paul Smith  
Chairman, House Judiciary Non-Civil Committee  
401-K State Capitol  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note  
House Bill 997 (LC 63 0038)

Dear Chairman Smith:

The bill limits how long the state can hold offenders in a county facility prior to being transported to a state facility and requires the Department of Corrections (GDC), the Department of Community Supervision (DCS), and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles (SBPP) to reimburse counties a minimum of \$50 per day for housing state inmates in county facilities. SBPP is also required to reimburse counties for medical services provided to parolees. The bill prohibits courts from ordering counties to transport inmates to non-county facilities.

The bill would result in additional costs to GDC, DCS, and SBPP as discussed below.

- **Department of Corrections** – GDC would incur jail costs for housing offenders in county facilities after sentencing and for transporting the offenders to state facilities. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, additional costs to GDC would total between \$43.5 million and \$48.6 million annually, while one-time costs were estimated at \$5.5 to \$10.3 million.

As shown in **Table 1**, using FY 2026 data, we estimated that the additional cost of jail reimbursements to counties at \$35.8 million. Clerks currently have 30 days to notify GDC of a new sentence. Once the sentence is accepted, GDC has 15 days to assign the inmate and transfer custody. GDC currently pays \$30 for each day a sentenced offender remains at the local jail beginning on day 16 after accepting the sentence. The bill would require a \$50 per day per offender reimbursement to counties beginning the day after sentencing. Additional costs include \$50 for the first 45 days, estimated at \$22.2 million. Based on the average jail stay after sentencing of 114 days, GDC would pay an additional \$20 per day for days 46 through 114, at a cost of \$13.6 million.

**Table 1: GDC Estimate of Annual Costs for County Jail Reimbursements**

Category	Number Sentenced	Days in Jail <sup>1</sup>	Costs
\$50/Day for First 45 Days	9,862	45	\$22,190,143
Additional \$20/Day after Day 45 <sup>2</sup>		69	\$13,628,914
<b>Total Jail Costs</b>		<b>114</b>	<b>\$35,819,057</b>

<sup>1</sup> GDC data showed an average of 114 days between sentence and admission to a GDC facility.

<sup>2</sup> GDC has a base budget of \$5,000 for reimbursements to locals in cases such as these.

As shown in **Table 2**, additional transportation results in one-time costs for the purchase of buses and vans, as well as annual costs for their operation and for additional transport officers. Sheriffs currently provide a portion of the transports of inmates from jails to GDC facilities. Under the bill, GDC would be responsible for all transport and would need to acquire additional vehicles and transport officers for the added trips.

**Table 2: GDC Estimate of One-Time and Annual Costs for Inmate Transportation**

	Low Estimate	High Estimate
<b>One-Time Costs</b>		
New Buses/Vans/Trail Vehicles	\$5,834,756	\$10,709,888
<b>Annual Costs</b>		
Transport Officers (78-128 FTEs)	\$7,943,958	\$13,036,239
Transport Regular Operating	<u>\$357,000</u>	<u>\$588,000</u>
<b>Total Annual</b>	<b>\$8,300,958</b>	<b>\$13,624,239</b>

One-time costs of \$5.8 million to \$10.7 million would be incurred for additional buses, vans, and trail vehicles. Based on information from GDC, the low estimate assumes one new bus, two vans, and three trail vehicles for each of the agency’s eight regional transport hubs. The high estimate includes two new buses, three vans, and five trail vehicles for each hub. The totals assume that buses are \$462,039 each, vans are \$52,553 each, and trail vehicles are \$40,733 each. The estimates also include three ADA vans in the low estimate and four in the high estimate at \$106,668 each.

Annual costs of \$8.3 million to \$13.6 million are related to officers and the operating costs for vehicles. We assumed two transport officers for each bus or van, as well as one per trail vehicle. Officers have a starting salary of \$60,762 plus benefits. Finally, regular operating costs (i.e., fuel, maintenance, repairs) were estimated at approximately \$7,000 per vehicle.

- **Department of Community Supervision** – DCS would incur costs for individuals arrested for probation violations, new arrests, and administrative expenses. As shown in **Table 3**, reimbursing counties for offenders in county facilities would result in additional costs of approximately \$277.2 million annually. DCS would require two customer service employees and a financial analyst to identify the offenders and process payments.

**Table 3: DCS Estimate of Costs for LC 63 0038**

Category	Annual Arrests	Avg Days in Jail	Cost per Person	Annual Costs
Violation of Probation	31,990	73	\$50	\$116,763,500
New Offense Arrests	<u>49,300</u>	65	\$50	<u>\$160,225,000</u>
Total Jail Costs	81,290			\$276,988,500
Administrative Costs				<u>\$232,482</u>
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$277,220,982</b>

- State Board of Pardons and Paroles** – SBPP currently uses a \$15 per day county jail reimbursement rate for housing parolees and reimbursement is made only for parolees held on a felony parole warrant issued by the Board. The bill would increase the daily rate and reimburse counties for parolees arrested on new charges. As shown in **Table 4**, reimbursing counties for housing parolees in county facilities would cost approximately \$15.7 million annually, plus \$135,025 in administrative costs for a Senior District Operations Manager (DOM) to review, investigate, and process the increase in jail subsidy invoices. One-time costs of \$43,730 would be incurred for a new vehicle, outfitting, uniform, and equipment for the additional employee.

**Table 4: SBPP Estimate of Costs for LC 63 0038**

Category	Annual Arrests	Avg Jail Days	Total Jail Days	Costs
<b>One-Time Costs</b>				
Vehicle, Uniform, Equipment				<b>\$43,730</b>
<b>Annual Costs</b>				
Felony Parole Warrants	151	24	3,624	\$181,200
Parolees with New Charges	<u>6,732</u>	46	<u>309,675</u>	<u>\$15,483,600</u>
Total Jail Costs	6,883	N/A	313,296	\$15,664,800
Additional Employee				<u>\$135,025</u>
<b>Total Annual Costs</b>				<b>\$15,798,825</b>

It should be noted that this estimate does not include the cost of medical services provided to parolees. SBPP was unable to provide a reliable estimate for these costs, which are not included in SBPP’s current appropriations. In 2009, SBPP was appropriated \$20,000 to pay medical reimbursements for parolees held on felony parole warrants. However, this funding was eliminated in FY 2010.

These estimates are based on available historical data on the number of offenders housed in county facilities and the length of stay, which is not tracked uniformly across each agency. Actual costs will be higher or lower if the number of offenders or the length of stay changes.

Respectfully,



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State Auditor



Richard Dunn, Director  
Office of Planning and Budget

GSG/RD/jb