



Legislative
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SB 19-020

FINAL FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 19-0221
Prime Sponsors: Sen. Coram; Fields
Rep. McLachlan

Date: July 18, 2019
Bill Status: Signed into Law
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Bill Topic: WILDLAND FIRE AIRSPACE PATROL SYSTEM

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

This bill requires the Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting to study and, if feasible, implement a system to patrol the airspace above a wildland fire. It increases state expenditures in FY 2019-20 and may increase future year expenditures depending on the outcome of the study.

Appropriation Summary: For FY 2019-20, the bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$350,000 to the Department of Public Safety.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the enacted bill which was recommended by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under Bill 1**

		FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
Revenue		-	-
Expenditures	General Fund	\$350,000	-
Transfers		-	-
TABOR Refund		-	-

Summary of Legislation

This bill requires the Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting (COE) in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to study and, if feasible, implement a system to patrol the airspace above a wildland fire. The patrol system must be capable of determining whether the airspace above a wildland fire is clear of obstacles such as private unmanned aircraft systems (drones) that might interfere with aerial firefighting activities.

Background and Assumptions.

The COE was created in 2014 in the Division of Fire Prevention and Control in the DPS to protect the citizens, land, and resources in Colorado by researching, testing, and evaluating new and existing technologies that support sustainable, effective, and efficient aerial firefighting techniques. According to the COE, there were five incidents of drones delaying or disrupting aerial fire suppression activities in 2018. Currently, the detection of drones is done through visual observation.

Currently two types of technologies are most commonly used to detect drones. These systems use radio tracking or radar based tracking technology. It is assumed that the COE will study both types of systems and make a recommendation about the use and implementation requirements of each. The impacts identified in this analysis are for the study of such systems. It is further assumed that any appropriation to cover the future implementation of such a system, if needed, will be requested through the annual budget process, once this study is complete.

State Expenditures

For FY 2019-20 only, this bill increases costs in the DPS by \$350,000 General Fund to study systems to patrol the airspace above a wildland fire. Costs assume that two systems, one radio frequency system and one radar system, will be purchased, tested, and evaluated. The total cost for both systems is \$300,000. Other costs are assumed to be \$50,000, and includes \$30,000 for hardware and \$20,000 for vendor evaluation and travel costs. At the time of this writing no such system is available to be leased, rented, or borrowed.

This bill also increases workload for the COE to work with vendors and to conduct the study, however this workload can be accomplished within existing appropriations. Depending on the outcome of the study future appropriations to the COE may be needed to implement an airspace patrol system.

Effective Date

This bill was signed into law by the Governor on June 3, 2019, and takes effect August 2, 2019, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

For FY 2019-20, the bill includes an appropriation of \$350,000 General Fund to the Department of Public Safety.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties Public Safety