



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

SB 26-045: NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION PROGRAM

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Liston; Mullica
Rep. Paschal; Winter T.

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Fiscal note status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. Conditional on the receipt of sufficient gifts, grants and donations, the bill creates a grant program in the Colorado School of Mines to distribute funds to institutions of higher education for programs related to nuclear energy.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on a through FY 2033-34:

- State Expenditures
- State Revenue
- Institutions of Higher Education

Appropriations. No appropriation is required. The Colorado Nuclear Workforce Development and Education Cash Fund is continuously appropriated to the Colorado School of Mines.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts**

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue (Cash Funds – Gifts, Grants & Donations)	\$500,000	\$500,000
State Expenditures (Cash Funds – Gifts, Grants & Donations)	\$500,000	\$500,000
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill creates the Colorado Nuclear Workforce Development and Education Program in the Colorado School of Mines. This program provides grants to institutions of higher education (IHEs) to develop or expand nuclear engineering degree programs.

The bill creates an eleven-member council in the School of Mines to award grants, promote nuclear energy activities, and provide technical assistance to eligible institutions. The council consists of energy experts and department representatives appointed by the Governor and legislative leadership. A third party must be hired to provide support to the council.

Members of the council are not compensated but may be reimbursed for expenses. All administrative, contracting, and other costs must be paid through gifts, grants and donations. The council must meet 42 days after the effective date of the bill and quarterly thereafter.

The bill creates the Nuclear Workforce Development and Education Cash Fund, which may receive gifts, grants and donations and is continuously appropriated. The School of Mines may only begin awarding grants to IHEs once the cash fund balance reaches at least \$500,000. The council is repealed on September 1, 2033, following a sunset review.

Assumptions

The provisions establishing the council and grant program do not take effect unless \$500,000 in gifts, grants, and donations has been received. The bill specifies that no General Fund appropriations may be made for the program. The fiscal note assumes that the council will not meet and that no administrative expenditures will be incurred until sufficient gifts, grants, and donations are received. If sufficient funding is not received, the fiscal note assumes that the program will not be implemented.

State Revenue

The bill may increase state revenue from gifts, grants, and donations to the Nuclear Workforce Development and Education Cash Fund. At least \$500,000 must be received for the program to be implemented. For informational purposes, the fiscal note indicates \$500,000 per year starting in FY 2026-27, but actual revenue may vary. The grant program will not be implemented until the balance in the cash fund balance exceeds this amount. Gifts, grants and donations are not subject to the state's TABOR revenue limit.

State Expenditures

Conditional upon the receipt of sufficient gifts, grants, and donations, the bill increases state expenditures in the Colorado School of Mines, paid from the Nuclear Workforce Development and Education Cash Fund. If funding is received, the program will have costs of at least \$500,000 per year. For informational purposes, the fiscal note shows program costs if \$500,000 in gifts, grants, or donations is received each year starting in FY 2026-27, as listed in Table 2 and discussed below. The bill also minimally affects workload in the Office of the Governor, the Department of Personnel and Administration and Department of the Treasury.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Department of Higher Education

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Grants to Institutions of Higher Education	\$450,000	\$450,000
Administrative Expenses	\$50,000	\$50,000
Total Costs	\$500,000	\$500,000

Institution of Higher Education

The Colorado School of Mines will have an increase in expenditures to convene the council, hire a third party to support the council, provide technical assistance, and distribute grants to other institutions of higher education. The fiscal note assumes that the School of Mines will use the maximum allowable amount to fund administrative expenses, or \$50,000 annually. Other institutions of higher education that apply for grants will have an increase in workload and expenditures to develop or expand nuclear programs. After accounting for administrative expenses, \$450,000 is available to be spent as grants to institutions if the minimum amount of gifts, grants, and donations required to implement the bill is received.

Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions

Workload will minimally increase for the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to make the required appointments under the bill. This work can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

Cash Fund Creation – Departments of Personnel and Treasury

Workload will increase for the Departments of Personnel and Administration (DPA) and Treasury to manage and perform accounting for the cash fund created in the bill. While no appropriation is required at this time, these departments may seek additional funding through the annual budget process based on the cumulative impact of all cash funds created through legislation.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Governor's Office

Personnel

Higher Education

Treasury