Fiscal Summary

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Measure: Initiative 219 – PROTECTIONS PRIOR TO BIRTH

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Fiscal Summary of Initiative 219

This fiscal summary, prepared by the nonpartisan Director of Research of the Legislative Council, contains a preliminary assessment of the measure's fiscal impact. A full fiscal impact statement for this initiative is or will be available at leg.colorado.gov/bluebook. This fiscal summary identifies the following impact.

State Revenue

The measure may reduce state licensing revenue if it results in the closure of licensed health facilities that provide abortion services. The measure may result in criminal fines and court filing fee revenue if the right to continue living after conception results in existing criminal and civil laws being applied to the unborn when this right is violated.

State Expenditures

Under current law, the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) is required to cover abortion services for Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus members using state funds, and public employee insurance plans are required to cover abortion care services for plan members. This measure will decrease costs in HCPF and for state employee health insurance plans by ending coverage for abortion services, and will increase costs to these entities for additional pregnancies and births. Additionally, to remain compliant with federal law, HCPF may have increased costs to transport a person who is pregnant as a result of rape or incest to another state to obtain an abortion.

The measure may also increase costs in other areas. If the measure leads to more persons being charged with criminal offenses, costs may increase for the Attorney General, state law enforcement agencies, and the courts for the investigation and prosecution of individuals charged with criminal offenses. Costs may increase for the Department of Corrections to incarcerate individuals convicted and sentenced to prison under the measure. Workload in the trial courts in the Judicial Department may also increase to hear additional civil cases. Finally, the Department of Public Health and Environment and Department of Regulatory Agencies may have an increase in workload to ensure regulated facilities and providers are in compliance with the new law.

Local Government

Similar to the state, this measure would decrease costs for local government employers that no longer cover abortion services for employees under their health insurance plans and increase costs from additional pregnancies and births. Local law enforcement agencies and district attorneys may have increased workload to investigate and prosecute more cases. Persons charged with criminal offenses under the measure may be held in a county jail while awaiting trial or if convicted of a misdemeanor, which would increase costs for counties. Finally, local public health agencies may have an increase in workload to ensure regulated facilities are in compliance with the new law.

Economic Impacts

The measure prohibits abortion services provided by medical providers, which will reduce income and jobs in this sector of the economy. If additional persons are incarcerated for violations under the measure, these individuals will not participate in the labor force, which may reduce income and spending in their households and communities. To the extent that the measure results in more children being born in the state, child-related spending will increase, potentially shifting spending from other areas of the economy. Additionally, labor market participation may decrease for parents or other caretakers. Over the long term, population growth may increase economic activity and output within the state.