

Agency Name:	Commission on Prosecution Coordination		
Agency Code:	E210	Section:	60



Fiscal Year FY 2025-2026

Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B1)</i>	For FY 2025-2026, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B2)</i>	For FY 2025-2026, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS <i>(FORM C)</i>	For FY 2025-2026, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS <i>(FORM D)</i>	For FY 2025-2026, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Lisa H. Catalanotto	(803) 343-0765	lisacatalanotto@cpc.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Janise Dove	(803) 832-8273	jdove@cpc.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2025-2026 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	<u>Agency Director</u>	<u>Board or Commission Chair</u>
SIGN/DATE:	<i>Lisa H. Catalanotto</i> 9/27/2024	<i>Isaac M. Stone III</i> 9/27/2024
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Lisa H. Catalanotto	Isaac McDuffie Stone III

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Commission on Prosecution Coordination
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BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Judicial Circuits State Support	4,200,000	0	0	0	4,200,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Agency Operating Increases	34,970	0	0	0	34,970	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B2 - Non-Recurring	Agency Operating Increases	16,375	0	0	0	16,375	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			4,251,345	0	0	0	4,251,345	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agency Name:	Commission on Prosecution Coordination		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Judicial Circuits State Support
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$4,200,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$4,200,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IT Technology/Security related
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR/Personnel Related
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consulted DTO during development	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education, Training, and Human Development
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Families
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	<p>Strategy 1.3: Support the programmatic and administrative operations of the Offices of Solicitor.</p> <p>Accountability: Funding to support technology advancements, hire and retain critical non-attorney prosecution staff, and offset court fines and fees revenue losses will support each of the above objectives. The objective measurements of success will be the reduction in the number of pending cases and the reduction in the time to court. It will also be seen in the increase in the number of people placed into successful diversion programs and treatment courts.</p>
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds will be distributed to the sixteen Offices of Circuit Solicitor and used for new and increased annual technology expenses, for salary and fringe to hire and retain non-attorney support staff, and for the operational expenses of solicitor programs. Funds will be allocated with \$2,940,000 distributed per capita according to the current official census and \$1,260,000 distributed on a pro-rata basis at an amount of \$78,750 per circuit.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

In 2022 (FY 23), the General Assembly provided one time money to begin the process of creating a technology system that accurately collects and analyzes data. In 2023 (FY 24), the General Assembly provided recurring funding for assistant solicitor recruitment and retention. Today all Solicitors have web-based case management systems that collect and analyze data. Further, the Solicitors have begun the process of hiring professional prosecutors, increasing the pay of current prosecutors, and have put in many aspects of a three-tier system that supports a proper number of prosecutors to run court, prepare cases for court, and triage cases as they come into the system.

By the end of FY 2023-24 the Solicitors had already reduced the criminal docket by 2641 warrants. Recruitment efforts with the additional funding for assistant solicitors has resulted in the hiring of 78 prosecutors statewide in FY 24, essentially meeting the hiring goal set in July 2023 of 79 prosecutors. Despite this, solicitors' offices still compete with higher pay offered for attorney positions at private law firms and other state agencies.

The Solicitors have made good progress. However, most Solicitors are finding that previous estimates of what is necessary to accomplish the goals fall short. Some offices need additional funding for storage of data and to maintain and support technology enhancements implemented. Some need additional funding to continue the salaries of their experienced prosecutors. Some offices need additional support staff.

Accordingly, this budget request aims to continue the progress made toward the eventual goal of an efficient and just criminal justice system by supplementing previous funding through Judicial Circuits State Support (Proviso 60.3). The SCCPC has worked together with the SC Commission on Indigent Defense to prepare budget requests that propose an equitable distribution of funds to the circuit solicitors and public defenders.

\$4,200,000 in additional Judicial Circuits State Support funding is requested for distribution among the Offices of Circuit Solicitor for increased technology expenses, for the recruitment and retention of non-attorney support staff, and to offset revenue losses from court fines and fees collections. \$2,940,000 will be distributed per capita based on each county's population according to the current official census. The remaining \$1,260,000 will be distributed pro-rata among the sixteen judicial circuits (\$78,750 each). The new funding would result in a median circuit increase of \$240,000.

Non-recurring technology funding appropriated for the Offices of Circuit Solicitor in FY 23 has been used by these offices for the replacement and upgrade of their case management systems, evidence management systems, increased data storage capability, basic and enhanced fiber connections and bandwidth to support internet connectivity, interface and integration connections with other systems, enhanced IT security, and other technology enhancements. While the non-recurring funding for technology has been instrumental in enabling the solicitors to purchase new case management systems or upgrade their existing systems, recurring technology funding is needed for the ongoing maintenance and support of the solicitors' case management systems and the recurring costs associated with enhanced internet service, evidence management systems, cloud data storage, and IT support services.

Recurring funding appropriated in FY 24 for Assistant Solicitor Recruitment and Retention has enabled the Offices of Circuit Solicitor to hire additional attorneys and retain their existing talent. Now, additional funding is needed for critical non-attorney prosecution team positions in solicitors' offices, including investigators, victim advocates, IT staff, paralegals, diversion program staff, and other administrative professionals. The funding will be used to increase salaries to retain key staff and hire additional prosecution staff needed to support the additional prosecutors hired statewide.

Finally, a portion of the funding requested is to offset the drop in court fines and fees revenue, which funding is used for the operation of diversion and treatment court programs. Between FY 15 and FY 19, the five-year average of annual court fines and fees collections distributed to the Offices of Circuit Solicitor was \$6,500,000. Between FY 20 and FY 24, the five-year average of annual collections remitted was \$4,900,000. Therefore, the average annual revenue from court fines and fees distributions is \$1,600,000 less than the average annual revenue before FY 20. In FY 22, the General Assembly appropriated \$480,000 for Judicial Circuits State Support funding to offset a portion of this loss, leaving a remaining annual shortage of \$1,120,000 from losses in solicitor court fines and fees revenue.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Agency Operating Increases
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$34,970 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$34,970
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IT Technology/Security related
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR/Personnel Related
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 3	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education, Training, and Human Development
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Families
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	<p>Strategy 1.1: Operate in an effective and efficient manner with available resources and seek funding for the additional staff and resources needed to accomplish the mission of the agency.</p> <p>Strategy 1.3: Support the programmatic and administrative operations of the Offices of Solicitor.</p> <p>Accountability: Funding to support the increased annual cost of accreditation for continuing legal education courses offered by the agency, contractual software services, and worker's compensation insurance premiums will support each of the above objectives. Performance measures include accreditation by the SC Supreme Court Commission on CLE to conduct continuing education on topics relevant to the prosecution of crimes, the efficient accounting of staff in the Offices of Circuit Solicitor and management of training registrations, enhanced communication with and distribution of resources to staff in the Offices of Circuit Solicitor, and the payment of required worker's compensation insurance premiums to accomplish the agency's mission and basic services.</p>
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds will be expended with the South Carolina Supreme Court Commission on CLE, third-party vendors for software licensing, and the State Accident Fund.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The goal of the requested funding is to support the increased cost of required accreditation by the Supreme Court Commission on CLE to conduct continuing legal education courses, licensing for event registration and management software used by the agency's Education Services division, licensing for public affairs software for the management of legislative actions relevant to prosecution, and worker's compensation insurance premiums.

One of the primary functions of the SCCPC is to provide continuing education training for prosecutors and other staff in the Offices of Circuit Solicitor. Effective January 2024, the South Carolina Supreme Court Commission on CLE increased its Accredited CLE Sponsor fee from \$200 per year. The new rate structure requires Accredited CLE Sponsors like the SCCPC to pay annually \$1,000 plus \$25 for each course conducted. For FY 26, the SCCPC estimates this cost to be \$2,000. Recurring funding is requested to offset this \$1,800 annual increase.

The SCCPC's current event registration system is sunsetting and will no longer be available for licensing or supported. After meeting with and reviewing the quotes and services offered by four vendors, the agency is transitioning to a new event registration software platform. The sunsetted registration system cost \$9,000 annually and included limited features. The annual cost for licensing and support of the new system is \$29,000 and includes enhanced user-friendly features that include not only basic course registration, but also allows for targeted e-mail communications, member engagement, easy access to materials and resources, and reporting of circuit staffing data. Recurring funding is requested to offset the \$20,000 annual increase of the new system. (Note: There is also an associated \$3,000 non-recurring funding request for one-time onboarding and implementation fees.)

The SCCPC requests funding to procure public affairs software to assist with the identification and tracking of legislation and with collaboration with legislators, solicitors, other agencies, and other criminal justice entities. The agency's sunsetted event registration software had very limited capabilities to assist with legislative tracking. The new public affairs software will have many more automated features that will improve internal efficiency, assist with easily identifying key legislation, and support communication and reports. \$11,500 in recurring funding is requested for the annual cost associated with this platform. (Note: There is also an associated \$1,000 non-recurring funding request for one-time onboarding and implementation fees.)

Finally, the SCCPC requests \$1,670 in recurring funding for the increased cost of the agency's workers' compensation insurance coverage provided by the State Accident Fund. The annual premium increased from \$9,861 in FY 24 to \$11,531 in FY 25.

Combined, the expenses the SCCPC is seeking increased recurring funding for include:

- \$1,800 – Increased cost of SC Supreme Court Commission on CLE course sponsor accreditation
- \$20,000 – Increased cost of Glue Up training event registration software and support
- \$11,500 – Public affairs software replacement and support
- \$1,670 – Increased cost of State Accident Fund workers' compensation coverage premium

Grand Total - \$34,970

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Agency Operating Increases
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$16,375
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IT Technology/Security related
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consulted DTO during development
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR/Personnel Related
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Agency Operating Increases	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education, Training, and Human Development
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Families
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	<p>Strategy 1.1: Operate in an effective and efficient manner with available resources and seek funding for the additional staff and resources needed to accomplish the mission of the agency.</p> <p>Strategy 1.2: Strengthen and modernize the collection, analysis, and distribution of meaningful criminal justice data.</p> <p>Strategy 1.3: Support the programmatic and administrative operations of the Offices of Solicitor.</p> <p>Accountability: Funding will be used to pay for the replacement of end-of-life Cisco switches required, managed and invoiced by The Department of Administration's Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS), for the onboarding and implementation of a new event registration software platform, and for the onboarding and implementation of a new public policy software platform.</p>
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	SC Department of Administration and third-party vendors
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The goal of the requested funding is to support the managed IT services provided by the Department of Administration's Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS) and the required replacement of equipment housed at OTIS, to pay for the onboarding and implementation of a new event registration and management software used by the agency's Education Services division, and to pay for the onboarding and implementation of a new public affairs software for the management of legislative actions relevant to prosecution.

OTIS informed the SCCPC in February 2024 that the Cisco 2960, 3650 and 3850 switches currently operating in our agency's environment housed at OTIS were approaching their end-of-life. These switches were replaced by OTIS to help ensure alignment with state security requirements. While the Department of Administration has incurred this cost for its shared services customers in the past, but communicated the expectation that such expenses will be the responsibility of agencies moving forward. As such, this expense has been invoiced to the SCCPC and the SCCPC was advised to request the funding for this expense from in our budget requests for FY 26. The amount invoiced to the SCCPC for the replacement of the CISCO switches is \$12,375.

The SCCPC is also requesting funding for the one-time onboarding and implementation fees associated with two new software programs to replace an older non-supported software program that has been sunset. These non-recurring expenses are \$3,000 for the agency's new event registration software and \$1,000 for a new public affairs software platform. The increased recurring cost of these two software programs is detailed in a recurring budget request submitted by the SCCPC as agency priority 2.

Combined, the expenses the SCCPC is seeking one-time funding for include:

- \$12,375 – SC Department of Administration's Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS) CISCO switch replacement
- \$3,000 – Onboarding and implementation of Glue Up training event registration software
- \$1,000 – Onboarding and implementation of a public affairs software platform

Grand Total - \$16,375

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	60.3
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	PCC: Judicial Circuits State Support
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	II. Offices of Circuit Solicitors
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	Judicial Circuits State Support
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2025-2026? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	None
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	<p>AMEND - 60.3. (PCC: Judicial Circuits State Support) Existing proviso requires distribution of Caseload Equalization Funding as follows: \$4,692,961 distributed on a per capita basis based upon the current official census, and the remaining \$1,659,041 distributed on a pro-rata basis.</p> <p>SCCPC REQUEST: AMEND proviso to increase the amounts referenced based on new funding requested and allocated in FY 26 for Judicial Circuits State Support. The distributions under the current proviso total \$6,352,002. For additional new recurring funding of \$4,200,000, the first \$2,940,000 shall be distributed on a per capita basis based upon the current official census. The remaining \$1,260,000 shall be distributed on a pro-rata basis among the sixteen circuit solicitors.</p> <p>With the additional recurring funding of \$4,200,000, the adjusted total recurring appropriation is \$10,552,002 and will be distributed such that \$7,632,961 will be distributed on a per capita basis based upon the current official census, and the remaining \$2,919,041 will be distributed on a pro-rata basis among the sixteen circuit solicitors.</p>
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT

General Fund: \$4,200,000 Recurring beginning in FY 26.

Federal: \$0

Other: \$0

The purpose of the additional appropriated funding is to create an efficient criminal justice system in which cases come to fruition in a matter of months and each case is handled professionally with the sole purpose of justice. \$4,200,000 in new recurring funding will be distributed to the Circuit Solicitors for increased technology expenses, for the recruitment and retention of non-attorney support staff, and to offset revenue losses from court fines and fees collections. \$2,940,000 will be distributed on a per capita basis, and the remaining \$1,260,000 will be distributed between the sixteen Offices of Circuit Solicitor on a pro-rata basis.

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

**PROPOSED
PROVISO TEXT**

Existing Proviso: 60.3. (PCC: Judicial Circuits State Support) The amount appropriated and authorized in this section for Judicial Circuits (16) State Support shall be apportioned among the circuits. The first \$4,692,961 shall be distributed on a per capita basis based upon the current official census. The next \$1,659,041 shall be distributed on a pro-rata basis. Payment shall be made as soon after the beginning of each quarter as practical.

Proposed Amendment: AMEND 60.3. (PCC: Judicial Circuits State Support) The amount appropriated and authorized in this section for Judicial Circuits (16) State Support shall be apportioned among the circuits. The first ~~\$4,692,961~~ **\$7,632,961** shall be distributed on a per capita basis based upon the current official census. The next ~~\$1,659,041~~ **\$2,919,041** shall be distributed on a pro-rata basis. Payment shall be made as soon after the beginning of each quarter as practical.

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

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FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
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AMOUNT	\$1,431,370
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What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	0 FTEs
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How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	<p>The SCCPC retains only 4% of the state funds appropriated to the agency. The remainder is pass-through funding that is distributed as required to the Offices of Solicitor or other entities. The agency cannot absorb a 3% cut without the total elimination of staff and statutorily required support services for the Offices of Solicitor. Thus, a 3% General Fund Budget reduction would be taken from pass-through funding allocated to the Offices of Solicitor for attorney positions. A reduction in the State’s prosecutors at a time when there is a critical need to significantly increase the number of these positions would be devastating to the Offices of Circuit Solicitor and managing court schedules that are already difficult to manage would become more so.</p>
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What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	<p>A 3% reduction in General Funds currently appropriated to the agency would have to be taken from pass-through funding for the Offices of Circuit Solicitor. Only 4% of the appropriated funds sent to the SCCPC are retained by the agency with the remaining 96% being distributed to the sixteen Offices of Circuit Solicitor and the South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families. Therefore, taking the reduction from the portion of funding retained by the SCCPC would result in elimination of all agency staff and operations. If the agency’s budget is reduced by 3%, the amount distributed to the Offices of Circuit Solicitor would be cut by \$1,431,370 and result in the loss of at least one attorney position in each circuit. Such a reduction in staffing would be an extremely difficult burden to bear at a time when additional attorney positions are required to manage existing caseloads and court schedules and would adversely impact the quality of justice received by the citizens of South Carolina.</p>
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Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

The SCCPC retains only 4% of state funding allocated to the agency, with the remainder distributed to the Offices of Circuit Solicitor or other entities. Cost and operating expense reductions totaling \$50,000 could not be sustained within the agency, which operates a single small office. As the workloads and staffing of the Offices of Solicitor continue to increase, additional responsibilities are being imposed upon prosecutors by the General Assembly and the courts, and the law and criminal procedure have become more complex, the service, training, project management, and reporting demands imposed upon the SCCPC have also increased. Any reduction in costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000 would be taken from the funds distributed to the Offices of Solicitor and adversely impact their prosecutions, programs, and services.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Protection of Citizens and Communities through the Administration of Justice
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	Unknown
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What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply: <table border="1"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Repeal or revision of regulations.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Other</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeal or revision of regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeal or revision of regulations.								
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.								
<input type="checkbox"/>	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other								

METHOD OF CALCULATION	Survey of sixteen Offices of Circuit Solicitor
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Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	N/A
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Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	N/A
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Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

	<p>The SCCPC is unable to identify any spending excess, fees, or fines that should be reduced, or any regulations that should be amended or eliminated. The SCCPC does not charge fees for the services provided; rather, it incurs expenses to provide its core services, and those expenses, particularly those related to technology and software, have increased, and continue to do so.</p> <p>The circuit solicitors receive revenue from fines and fees as directed by statute; however, those revenue collections have significantly declined. The five-year average annual revenue from court fines and fees distributions between FY 20 and FY 24 is \$1,600,000 less than the previous five-year average annual revenue between FY 15 and FY 19. FY 24 revenue from statutory court fines and fees is 24% less than in FY 15, and the cumulative loss in revenue from court fines and fees for the solicitors' offices since FY 19 (comparing the revenue collected that FY before COVID-19 began impacting court operations) through FY 24 is \$6,176,592 Million.</p> <p>The solicitors' revenue from court fees and fines, program participation fees, and application fees primarily support the solicitors' diversion and drug/treatment court programs. The revenue losses experienced have resulted in reductions in staff to support the operation of diversion and treatment court programs and the number of persons that can be admitted into and served by these programs.</p> <p>In addition to court fee revenue losses, solicitors' offices lose revenue from expungement application fees and diversion/drug court participation fees because of exemptions for payment of these fees. These programs must continue to operate with less revenue and cannot maintain adequate staffing for these programs as a result, which leads to declining participation in diversion programs and even further revenue losses.</p>
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SUMMARY

While revenue losses continue to limit the operations and programs of the Offices of Solicitor, prosecutor caseloads continue to increase. In the period between the 2010 census and the 2020 census, population in South Carolina has grown 10.66%. Unfortunately, the number of arrests during that same length of time increased 13.23%, exceeding population growth. The difficulty and complexity of cases has also increased as more and more cases involve violent crimes.

Perhaps the biggest change in criminal justice over the past ten years has been the use of technology by criminals. Cell phone and social media use is prevalent in our society and criminals take advantage of it. They use cell phones and social media to plan, execute, photograph, and publish their crimes. They also use technology to threaten, bully and exploit people. The Offices of Solicitor must continually implement the most current technology advances to keep pace with the technology used by criminals. The lack of sophisticated technology not only hinders the ability of solicitors to combat crime, but it also causes decreased efficiency, accessibility to case files and tracking capability that further compounds the increase in docket backlog.

The State has recognized these challenges and has assisted with addressing the funding needs of the Offices of Solicitor and the SCCPC through the state budget. \$9.6 Million in non-recurring technology funding was appropriated to the circuit solicitors for FY 23 and has been used for the replacement and upgrade of their case management systems, evidence management systems, increased data storage capability, basic and enhanced fiber connections and bandwidth to support internet connectivity, interface and integration connections with other systems, enhanced IT security, and other technology enhancements. The technology improvements that have or will be implemented by the solicitors through their case management systems will enable them to better combat crime, assist law enforcement, address docket backlog, and maintain security of sensitive information. At the time the non-recurring funding was appropriated for FY 23, the General Assembly recognized that recurring funds would be necessary to continue supporting the one-time technology costs expended by the solicitors using non-recurring funding. The circuit solicitors are hopeful that the funding necessary to pay for these recurring expenditures will now be appropriated in the FY 26 budget.

The Offices of Solicitor must have adequate numbers of prosecutors and staff to handle the increased volume of criminal cases and the ability to retain experience and talent. To begin addressing this need, \$14.53 Million in recurring funding was appropriated in FY 24 to the circuit solicitors for the recruitment and retention of assistant solicitors. This critical funding has enabled the solicitors to provide salary increases for existing prosecutors for retention purposes and to hire additional attorneys to restore the efficient processing of cases. Seventy-eight (78) prosecutors were hired statewide in FY 24 and, while 50 prosecutors left the Offices of Circuit Solicitor during that same period, there are twenty-nine (29) more prosecutors in the solicitors' offices than there were at the end of FY 23. The solicitors continue to recruit additional prosecutors with the funding provided in FY 24; however, to support the increased number of prosecutors and to ensure their time is being used efficiently, additional support staff is needed to assist with the increased processing of cases. The circuit solicitors are hopeful that funding to support the hiring and retention of investigators, paralegals and victim advocates will now be appropriated in the FY 26 budget.

The State has also provided funding over the last two fiscal years to improve the technology posture of the SCCPC. Both recurring and non-recurring funding has been appropriated to assist with the agency's development of its database project for the collection of statewide prosecution data. A handful of electronic online forms developed by the agency's procured vendor have been completed used for the collection of data needed for reports required by the General Assembly. Additional e-forms are still under development. The completed database will incorporate interface capabilities between the SCCPC and the Offices of Circuit Solicitor. This will eliminate much of the manual data entry of information contained in the solicitors' case management systems as well as duplicate data entry by both the solicitors' offices and the SCCPC, which will increase efficiency and accuracy in the collection of prosecution data. Upon full implementation, the database will streamline and maximize the accurate and efficient collection of existing statewide data to meet reporting requirements, analyze case data and trends, and measure the programmatic effectiveness of the Offices of Circuit Solicitor. The database will also provide the circuit solicitors with better access to statewide prosecution data and enable them to better assess their programs, identify and track criminal activity trends, and develop targeted strategies for improving the management of their offices and suppressing criminal activity in their communities.

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?