

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6840
BILL NUMBER: SB 653

DATE PREPARED: Dec 16, 1998
BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Firearms and convicted felons.

FISCAL ANALYST: Mark Bucherl
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FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill provides that a person who: (1) has been convicted of a felony; and (2) owns, carries, or possesses a firearm, commits a Class D felony. It specifies that the law does not apply to a person who owns, carries, or possesses a firearm: (1) in the person's dwelling; (2) on the person's property; (3) in the person's fixed place of business; or (4) that was made before January 1, 1899, and does not use fixed cartridges or fixed ammunition. (Current law provides that a person who: (1) has been convicted of a felony; and (2) owns, carries, or possesses a firearm not designed to use fixed cartridges or fixed ammunition, or a firearm made before January 1, 1899, commits a Class D felony.)

Effective Date: Upon passage.

Explanation of State Expenditures: This bill potentially increases the number of Class D felony convictions possible for this offense. A Class D felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from 6 months to 3 years or reduction to Class A misdemeanor depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The average expenditure to house an adult offender was \$20,500 in FY 97. Individual facility expenditures range from \$11,000 to \$27,000. (This does not include the cost of new construction.) If offenders can be housed in existing facilities with no additional staff, the average cost for medical care, food, and clothing is approximately \$1,825 annually or \$5 daily per prisoner. The average length of stay in DOC facilities for all Class D felony offenders is approximately seven months.

Explanation of State Revenues: If additional court cases occur and fines are collected, revenue to both the Common School Fund and the state General Fund could increase. The maximum fine for a Class D felony is \$10,000. Criminal fines are deposited in the Common School Fund. If the case is filed in a circuit, superior, county or municipal court (courts of record), 70% of the \$120 court fee that is assessed and collected when a guilty verdict is entered would be deposited in the state General Fund. If the case is filed in a city or town court, 55% of the fee would be deposited in the state General Fund.

Explanation of Local Expenditures: If more defendants are detained in county jails prior to their court hearings, local expenditures for jail operations may increase. The average cost per day is approximately \$44.

Explanation of Local Revenues: If additional court actions occur and a guilty verdict is entered, local governments would receive revenue from the following sources: (1) The county general fund would receive 27% of the \$120 court fee that is assessed in a court of record. Cities and towns maintaining a law enforcement agency that prosecutes at least 50% of its ordinance violations in a court of record may receive 3% of court fees. If the case is filed in a city or town court, 20% of the court fee would be deposited in the county general fund and 25% would be deposited in the city or town general fund. (2) A \$3 fee would be assessed, and if collected, would be deposited into the county law enforcement continuing education fund. (3) A \$2 jury fee is assessed, and if collected, would be deposited into the county user fee fund to supplement the compensation of jury members.

State Agencies Affected: Department of Correction.

Local Agencies Affected: Trial courts, local law enforcement agencies.

Information Sources: Indiana Sheriffs Association, Department of Correction.