

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6355**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 334

**NOTE PREPARED:** Feb 8, 2005

**BILL AMENDED:** Feb 7, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Murder Sentencing.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Young R Michael

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading - 1<sup>st</sup> House

**FUNDS AFFECTED:**  **GENERAL**  
 **DEDICATED**  
 **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** (Amended) This bill provides that persons who commit murder may receive the death penalty or life imprisonment without parole if certain protective orders were in effect for the benefit of the murder victim and against the person who committed the murder at the time the murder was committed.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2005.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** State expenditures depend on the outcome of the criminal trial. If a prosecuting attorney requests the death penalty and the court imposes a death sentence on a defendant, then state expenditures will be less than when a prosecuting attorney seeks and the court imposes life imprisonment without parole. And a determinative sentence of 65 years where the offender is released after 32½ years for good behavior requires less expenditures than the other two sentences. However, the *combined* costs for the state agencies and county governments for a death penalty case, even when the offender is executed, exceeds the costs of a trial where the most serious sentence would be life without parole or a determinative sentence of 65 years.

**Background Information:** In the following analysis, LSA staff compared the costs that the state assumes for state assistance to the counties in the trial stage, and the staff costs during direct appeal, post conviction relief, and federal habeas corpus review. The average age of 84 offenders who were sentenced to death was 30 at the time when a request for a death penalty was made against them.

LSA assumed that convicted offenders would:

- spend an average period of 16 years on death row before being executed if the death penalty was

- imposed;
- serve 32½ years of a sentence if sentenced to 65 years in prison since most offenders reduce their sentences by one day for each day that they comply with prison facility codes of behavior;
- remain in DOC facilities until the age of 77 if sentenced to life without parole.

Because these costs occur at different points in time, a net present value was prepared for each cost stream assuming an annual inflation rate of 5%. The following table presents the net present value of these costs.

<b>Post Trial Costs to the State of Sentencing Options for a 30-Year-Old Offender Sentenced for Aggravated Murder</b>			
<u>Sentence</u>	<u>Number of Years of Incarceration</u>	<u>Net Present Value for:</u>	
		<u>State Expenditures</u>	<u>State and County Expenditures</u>
Death Penalty	16*	\$575,861	\$741,246
Life Without Parole	47	\$582,685	\$622,957
65 Years with 50% Credit Time	32.5	\$466,460	\$506,732
* Based on nine offenders who appealed execution.			

The following variables are included in this analysis.

Cost of Health Care – It is assumed that the health care costs rise substantially in the later years of an offender’s life. Consequently, the costs to the Department of Correction (DOC) will increase substantially for older offenders. The data in the following table was used to account for the added cost to DOC for the later years of an offender who is sentenced to life without parole.

<b>Estimated Costs of Health Care by Age Group</b>	
<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
18 - 24	\$ 1,095
25 - 44	\$ 1,844
45 - 64	\$ 4,319
over 65	\$ 8,589

Cost of Incarceration – The average annual expenditure for housing offenders (not including health care costs) is based on the average annual adult institution cost in FY 2004 of \$21,308 less the average annual health care costs of \$2,029.

Added Costs for Financial Assistance At Trial - The Public Defense Fund reimburses 50% of the authorized costs to counties when a death penalty trial is occurring and 40% when a noncapital case is being tried. The costs of a death penalty trial are higher because two attorneys are needed and two different trials occur.

The following shows the average costs incurred by the Public Defense Fund for death penalty and life without parole cases.

<b>Cost Components for Murder Trials:</b>		
	<b>Death Penalty</b>	<b>Life Without Parole</b>
Attorneys and Related Costs	\$107,804	\$27,370

Public Defense Fund expenditures for FY 1996 through FY 2002 for partially reimbursing counties for the costs of capital cases are reported for each fiscal year between 1998 and 2003.

<b>Reimbursements for Capital Cases by Fiscal Year</b>					
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
\$799,450	\$526,512	\$378,209	\$712,055	\$473,317	\$342,464

The Fund also partially reimburses counties for the costs of noncapital cases as reported for the fiscal years between 1998 and 2003.

<b>Reimbursements (in Millions) for Noncapital Cases By Fiscal Year</b>					
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
\$1.03	\$2.18	\$3.30	\$3.66	\$4.86	\$5.37

The Public Defense Fund receives an annual statutory allotment of \$3.4 M derived from a transfer from the state General Fund under IC 33-19-7-5 beginning in FY 2005 and a \$4.4 M. transfer beginning in FY 2006.

Added Costs of Appeals - There are three general stages of review of criminal cases at the state and federal level: direct appeal and post conviction relief at the state level and habeas corpus at the federal level. The Office of the Attorney General represents the state in all three stages of review in death penalty cases, and in direct appeal and habeas corpus if a determinate sentence is imposed. The State Public Defender's office represents convicted offenders requesting indigent counsel in post conviction relief.

The following costs were used to compare the costs between these sentencing options.

<b>State Agency</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Death Penalty Trial</b>	<b>Life Without Parole</b>
State Public Defender	Represents convicted offenders requesting indigent counsel in post conviction relief	\$191,182	\$3,724
Office of the Attorney General	Represents the state in all three stages of review in death penalty cases	\$72,503	\$12,004
Department of Correction	Execution costs and annual per diem and medical costs	\$20,588 for execution	annual per diem and medical costs
State Police	Security and appeals at execution	\$4,012	

The following shows the stages of review once the death penalty trial has been completed.

<b>Review Level</b>	<b>Court of Review</b>	<b>Issues Permitted To Be Raised</b>
Direct Appeal	State Supreme Court	Defendant required to show that what happened at trial was legally erroneous. Defendant may not present new evidence.
Post Conviction Relief (PCR)	Trial Court	Newly discovered evidence such as DNA and other issues may be presented.
Subsequent Appeal of PCR	State Supreme Court	Decides on the evidence presented at the PCR review.
Federal Habeas Corpus Review	Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals	Federal courts may not grant relief if the claim was waived in the state court or if the issue was not presented or properly presented in state court.

See also *Explanation of Local Expenditures*.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** Under current law, the prosecuting attorney would not be able to request either the death penalty or life without parole unless one of 16 aggravating circumstances under IC 35-50-2-9 could be cited when a murder occurred.

*Background Information:* Of the three possible sentencing options for murder, the death penalty is generally the most expensive for trial courts to conduct because two attorneys are required to represent the accused, and a bifurcated trial is conducted to determine guilt or innocence and whether a sentence of death is warranted. Life without parole is the next most expensive option because, while two attorneys are not required for legal representation, a bifurcated trial is also required to determine guilt or innocence and then whether a sentence of life without parole is warranted. Determinate sentencing of between 45 and 65 years is the least expensive option because one trial is conducted and two attorneys are not required to represent the defendant.

The following table summarizes the difference between these three options.

<b><u>Sentencing Option</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Defense Attorneys Needed</u></b>	<b><u>Type of Trial Conducted</u></b>
Death Penalty	Two	Bifurcated - one to determine guilt or innocence and one to determine whether death penalty is warranted; a sentencing hearing is separate.
Life Without Parole	One	Bifurcated - one to determine guilt or innocence and one to determine whether death penalty is warranted; a sentencing hearing is separate.
Determinate Sentence Between 45 and 65 Years	One	A single trial to determine guilt or innocence; a sentencing hearing is separate.

Consequently, the costs of legal representation for a case where the most serious sentence is between 45 and 65 years would likely be lower than the costs of a case involving life without parole.

No information is available on the costs of murder cases in which the most serious sentence was between 45 and 65 years of incarceration. However, at the request of the Criminal Law Study Commission, Legislative Services Agency staff compared the costs of death penalty cases and cases in which life without parole was the most serious outcome that could occur. The following table displays the cost components for a “typical death penalty trial and a trial where life without parole is the most serious sentence.

<b>Cost Components for Murder Trials:</b>		
	<b>Death Penalty</b>	<b>Life Without Parole</b>
Attorneys and Related Costs*	\$107,804	\$27,370
Jury and Related Costs	\$46,375	\$10,150
Cost of Appeals	\$54,355	\$5,466
Prosecuting Attorney	\$2,340	\$2,948
County Sheriff	\$8,472	\$4,380
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$219,346</b>	<b>\$50,314</b>
*Net Costs After Reimbursement From Public Defense Fund		

The cost of legal representation for a criminal defendant in a death penalty case is four times as expensive as the costs of a criminal trial in which the most serious sentence is life without parole. The costs of a trial where a determinate sentence is the most serious sentence is likely to be less than the costs of a trial in which life without parole is the most serious sentence.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** Department of Correction, Office of the Attorney General, Office of the State Public Defender, State Police.

**Local Agencies Affected:** Trial Courts, County Sheriff.

**Information Sources:** Indiana Supreme Court; *The Application of Indiana’s Capital Sentencing Law, Findings of the Indiana Criminal Law Study Commission* (January 10, 2002); Website of Clark County (IN) Prosecuting Attorney, <http://www.clarkprosecutor.org/html/death/>; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2002 Full-Year Consolidated Data File (HC-070), Released December 2004. Medical Expenditure Panel Survey Household Component Data, Generated using MEPSnet/HC, <<http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsnet/HC/MEPSnetHC.asp>>; Department of Correction.

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