

4/5/01 Planned on

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS CALENDAR

3/20/01 Amend / Do Pass  
HUMAN RESOURCES W/S- 3190

FILED MAR 5 '01

SENATE FILE 353  
BY SCHUERER

(COMPANION TO HF 23 BY TYRRELL)

Passed Senate, Date \_\_\_\_\_ Passed House, Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote: Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Nays \_\_\_\_\_ Vote: Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Nays \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved \_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act establishing covenant marriages and providing an effective  
2 date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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SF 353  
HUMAN RESOURCES

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 595.3B COVENANT MARRIAGE --  
2 APPLICATION FORM.

3 1. The county registrar shall provide each applicant for a  
4 marriage license with a copy of the informational pamphlet on  
5 covenant marriage prepared by the office of the attorney  
6 general pursuant to section 595A.6.

7 2. In addition to any other information contained in an  
8 application form for a marriage license, the application form  
9 shall contain a place to acknowledge, over the signature of  
10 both parties to the marriage, the awareness of the parties of  
11 the option to designate their marriage as a covenant marriage,  
12 and the intent of the parties to designate their marriage as a  
13 covenant marriage or a noncovenant marriage.

14 3. If the parties designate their marriage a covenant  
15 marriage, the parties shall also attach a copy of the  
16 declaration of intent as provided in section 595A.2.

17 Sec. 2. Section 595.4, Code 2001, is amended by adding the  
18 following new unnumbered paragraph:

19 NEW UNNUMBERED PARAGRAPH. A license to marry shall  
20 indicate whether the marriage will be designated a covenant  
21 marriage.

22 Sec. 3. Section 595.13, Code 2001, is amended to read as  
23 follows:

24 595.13 CERTIFICATE -- RETURN.

25 After the marriage has been solemnized, the officiating  
26 minister or magistrate shall return the certificate of  
27 marriage within fifteen days to the county registrar who  
28 issued the marriage license upon the blank provided for that  
29 purpose. The certificate of marriage shall indicate whether  
30 the marriage is a covenant marriage.

31 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 595A.1 COVENANT MARRIAGE -- INTENT  
32 -- CONDITIONS TO CREATE.

33 1. A man and woman who intend to enter a covenant marriage  
34 shall include this intent on the marriage license application  
35 form pursuant to section 595.3B and by executing a declaration

1 of intent to contract a covenant marriage as provided in  
2 section 595A.2.

3 2. A covenant marriage is a contract entered into by one  
4 man and one woman who understand and agree that the marriage  
5 between them is a lifelong relationship, as indicated in the  
6 declaration of intent signed by both parties. Parties to a  
7 covenant marriage shall receive premarital education prior to  
8 entering the covenant marriage which emphasizes the nature and  
9 purposes of marriage and the responsibilities of marriage.  
10 Only when there has been a complete and total breach of the  
11 marital covenant contract shall the nonbreaching party be  
12 allowed to seek a declaration that the marriage is no longer  
13 legally recognized.

14 3. Parties to a covenant marriage shall receive at least  
15 twelve hours of premarital education that is provided by a  
16 licensed or ordained minister, or the minister's designee, a  
17 person authorized to solemnize marriages under section  
18 595.10, or a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to  
19 chapter 154D. The education provided shall include a  
20 discussion of the seriousness of marriage and that it is a  
21 commitment for life, the teaching of communication skills, the  
22 teaching of conflict management skills, and a discussion of  
23 the obligation to seek marital counseling in times of marital  
24 difficulties.

25 4. The declaration of intent to enter a covenant marriage  
26 is aspirational only and a failure by a party to comply with  
27 the statements contained in the declaration does not  
28 constitute additional grounds for dissolution of a covenant  
29 marriage beyond those provided in section 595A.4.

30 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 595A.2 COVENANT MARRIAGE --  
31 CONTENTS OF DECLARATION OF INTENT.

32 1. A declaration of intent to contract a covenant marriage  
33 shall contain all of the following:

34 a. A statement by the parties to the following effect:

35 "We, (names of both parties), solemnly declare our intent

1 to enter into a covenant marriage and we agree to live  
2 together as husband and wife as long as we both live. We have  
3 chosen each other carefully and voluntarily accept the  
4 exclusive grounds for dissolution of a covenant marriage. We  
5 have received the required premarital education, which  
6 included a discussion of the seriousness of marriage and that  
7 it is a commitment for life, the teaching of communication  
8 skills, the teaching of conflict management skills, and a  
9 discussion of the obligation to seek marital counseling in  
10 times of marital difficulties. We have read the pamphlet  
11 regarding covenant marriage and understand that a covenant  
12 marriage is for life. If either of us experiences serious  
13 difficulties with the marriage, we accept the ethical  
14 responsibility to inform the other spouse about the extent of  
15 those problems in time for corrective action to be taken and  
16 will make all reasonable efforts to preserve our marriage,  
17 including participation in marital counseling."

18 b. A statement from the person who provided the premarital  
19 education to the following effect:

20 "I, (name of provider), confirm that (names of both parties  
21 to the marriage) received at least twelve hours of premarital  
22 education that complies with Iowa Code section 595A.1. I am a  
23 licensed or ordained minister, a person authorized to  
24 solemnize marriages under Iowa Code section 595.10 or a  
25 marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to Iowa Code  
26 chapter 154D."

27 c. (1) The signature of both parties, witnessed by a  
28 notary public.

29 (2) If one or both of the parties are minors, the written  
30 consent or authorization of those persons required under  
31 section 595.2 to consent to or authorize the marriage of  
32 minors.

33 2. The declaration of intent shall be prepared in  
34 duplicate originals, one of which shall be retained by the  
35 parties and the other of which shall be filed with the county

1 registrar.

2 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 595A.3 COVENANT MARRIAGE --  
3 APPLICABILITY TO EXISTING MARRIAGES.

4 1. On or after January 1, 2002, married parties may  
5 designate their marriage as a covenant marriage by executing a  
6 declaration of intent in accordance with this section.

7 2. The declaration of intent shall be filed with the  
8 county registrar with whom the marriage license of the parties  
9 is filed. If the parties were married outside of the state, a  
10 copy of the foreign marriage certificate, with the declaration  
11 of intent attached, shall be filed with the county registrar  
12 in the county in which the parties reside. The county  
13 registrar shall make a notation on the marriage certificate of  
14 the declaration of intent of a covenant marriage and shall  
15 attach a copy of the declaration to the certificate.

16 3. A declaration of intent to designate an existing  
17 marriage as a covenant marriage shall contain all of the  
18 following:

19 a. A statement by the parties to the following effect:

20 "We, (names of both parties), solemnly declare that our  
21 marriage is a covenant marriage and we agree to live together  
22 as husband and wife as long as we both live. We voluntarily  
23 accept the exclusive grounds for dissolution of a covenant  
24 marriage. We have received the required marital education,  
25 which included a discussion of the obligation to seek marital  
26 counseling in times of marital difficulties and an explanation  
27 of the exclusive grounds for dissolving a covenant marriage.  
28 We have read the informational pamphlet regarding covenant  
29 marriage and understand that a covenant marriage is for life.  
30 If either of us experiences serious difficulties with the  
31 marriage, we accept the ethical responsibility to inform the  
32 other spouse about the extent of those problems in time for  
33 corrective action to be taken and will make all reasonable  
34 efforts to preserve our marriage, including participation in  
35 marital counseling. With full knowledge of what this

1 commitment means, we declare that our marriage will be bound  
2 by the state law on covenant marriage and we promise to love,  
3 honor, and care for one another as husband and wife for the  
4 rest of our lives."

5 b. A statement from the person who provided the marital  
6 education to the following effect:

7 "I, (name of provider), confirm that (names of both parties  
8 to the marriage) received marital education that complies with  
9 Iowa Code section 595A.3. I am a licensed or ordained  
10 minister, a person authorized to solemnize marriages under  
11 Iowa Code section 595.10 or a marital and family therapist  
12 licensed pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 154D."

13 c. The signature of both parties, witnessed by a notary  
14 public.

15 4. The marital education provided to parties to a marriage  
16 who wish to designate their marriage as a covenant marriage  
17 shall be provided by a licensed or ordained minister, a person  
18 authorized to solemnize marriages under section 595.10, or a  
19 marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to chapter  
20 154D. The education provided shall include a discussion of  
21 the obligation to seek marital counseling in times of marital  
22 difficulties and an explanation of the exclusive grounds for  
23 dissolution of a covenant marriage. The educator shall  
24 provide the parties with the informational pamphlet on  
25 covenant marriage developed by the office of the attorney  
26 general pursuant to section 595A.6.

27 Sec. 7. NEW SECTION. 595A.4 DISSOLUTION AND SEPARATE  
28 MAINTENANCE IN A COVENANT MARRIAGE -- EXCLUSIVE GROUNDS.

29 1. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, and  
30 subsequent to the parties obtaining marital counseling, a  
31 party to a covenant marriage may obtain an order of separate  
32 support and maintenance or a dissolution of marriage, only  
33 upon proof of any of the following:

34 a. The other party has committed adultery.

35 b. The other party has committed a felony and has been

1 sentenced to imprisonment.

2 c. The other party has abandoned the matrimonial domicile  
3 for a period of one year and refuses to return.

4 d. The other party has physically or sexually abused the  
5 party seeking the order or dissolution or a child of one of  
6 the parties.

7 e. The parties have been living separate and apart  
8 continuously without reconciliation for a period of two years.

9 2. In all proceedings for separate support and maintenance  
10 or dissolution of marriage pursuant to subsection 1, the court  
11 shall order the parties to complete at least twelve hours of  
12 marital counseling that involves both parties and emphasizes  
13 the principles of reconciliation. The court may require the  
14 parties to pay an equal share of the costs of the counseling  
15 or may apportion the cost between the parties based on the  
16 ability to pay. The counseling shall be provided by a  
17 licensed or ordained minister or the minister's designee, a  
18 person authorized to solemnize a marriage pursuant to section  
19 595.10, or a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to  
20 chapter 154D. The court may waive all or part of the  
21 counseling requirement to the extent the parties have already  
22 received the required twelve hours of marital education within  
23 one year of the petition for separate support and maintenance  
24 or dissolution of marriage.

25 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. 595A.5 COVENANT MARRIAGE -- OTHER  
26 APPLICABLE LAWS.

27 1. A covenant marriage shall be governed by all of the  
28 nonconflicting provisions of chapter 595.

29 2. A dissolution of or order of separate support and  
30 maintenance relating to a covenant marriage shall be governed  
31 by all of the nonconflicting provisions of chapter 598.

32 Sec. 9. NEW SECTION. 595A.6 ATTORNEY GENERAL --  
33 PAMPHLET.

34 Prior to July 1, 2001, the office of the attorney general  
35 shall develop an informational pamphlet entitled "Covenant

1 Marriage Option" which shall outline in sufficient detail the  
2 requirements for entering into a covenant marriage or  
3 designating an existing marriage as a covenant marriage, the  
4 implications of entering into a covenant marriage or  
5 designating an existing marriage as a covenant marriage, the  
6 grounds for dissolution of a covenant marriage, and the legal  
7 differences between a covenant marriage and a noncovenant  
8 marriage. The informational pamphlet shall be made available  
9 to all offices of the county registrar and to all persons who  
10 provide premarital and marital education under this chapter.

11 Sec. 10. EFFECTIVE DATE. The section of this Act creating  
12 section 595A.6 relating to the pamphlet developed by the  
13 attorney general, being deemed of immediate importance, takes  
14 effect upon enactment.

15 EXPLANATION

16 This bill establishes the procedure and requirements for a  
17 covenant marriage. The bill requires the county registrar to  
18 provide each applicant for a marriage license with an  
19 informational pamphlet on covenant marriage, prepared by the  
20 office of the attorney general. The bill requires the  
21 application form for a marriage license to include a place for  
22 the parties to indicate that they have been informed of the  
23 option to designate the marriage a covenant marriage, and to  
24 indicate, with their signatures, their intent to designate  
25 their marriage a covenant marriage or a noncovenant marriage.  
26 If the parties designate their marriage a covenant marriage,  
27 they are to attach a copy of the declaration of their intent  
28 to the marriage license application. The license to marry and  
29 the certificate of marriage are also to indicate whether the  
30 marriage is designated a covenant marriage.

31 The bill describes a covenant marriage, requires that the  
32 parties to a covenant marriage complete at least 12 hours of  
33 premarital education, and provides that the declaration of  
34 intent to enter a covenant marriage is aspirational and  
35 failure of a party to comply with the statements included in

1 the declaration does not provide additional grounds for  
2 dissolution beyond those provided in the bill.

3 The bill specifies the contents of the declaration of  
4 intent and requires a statement relating to the intent of the  
5 parties to designate their marriage as a covenant marriage,  
6 requires a statement from the person who provided the  
7 premarital education relating to confirmation of the  
8 completion by the parties of the required education, and  
9 requires the signature of each party, or if one or both of the  
10 parties are minors, the written consent or authorization of  
11 those persons designated by law to provide consent or  
12 authorization. The declaration of intent is to be prepared in  
13 duplicate originals with one original being retained by the  
14 parties and one original being filed with the county  
15 registrar.

16 The bill also provides a procedure for parties to an  
17 existing marriage to designate their marriage as a covenant  
18 marriage, similar to the procedure established for entering  
19 into a marriage.

20 The bill provides the exclusive grounds for obtaining  
21 separate support and maintenance under or dissolution of a  
22 covenant marriage which include: that a party commits  
23 adultery, commits a felony and is imprisoned, abandons the  
24 matrimonial domicile for one year and refuses to return,  
25 physically or sexually abuses the other party or a child of  
26 one of the parties, or is living separate and apart  
27 continuously without reconciliation for a period of two years.  
28 In all proceedings for separate support and maintenance or  
29 dissolution based on a covenant marriage, the court is to  
30 order the parties to complete at least 12 hours of marital  
31 counseling. The court may waive the requirement to the extent  
32 that the parties have already completed other required  
33 education.

34 The bill provides that nonconflicting provisions of the  
35 marriage chapter (Code chapter 595) and the dissolution

1 chapter (Code chapter 598) apply to covenant marriages.  
2 The bill directs the office of the attorney general to  
3 develop a pamphlet entitled "Covenant Marriage Option" to  
4 outline the requirements of a covenant marriage, the  
5 implications of entering into a covenant marriage, the grounds  
6 for dissolution of a covenant marriage, and the legal  
7 differences between covenant and noncovenant marriages. The  
8 pamphlet is to be available at the offices of the county  
9 registrar and to all persons who provide premarital and  
10 marital education. This section of the bill takes effect upon  
11 enactment.

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**SENATE FILE 353****S-3190**

1 Amend Senate File 353 as follows:

2 1. Page 5, lines 27 and 28, by striking the words  
3 "AND SEPARATE MAINTENANCE IN" and inserting the  
4 following: "OF".

5 2. Page 5, by striking lines 31 and 32, and  
6 inserting the following: "party to a covenant  
7 marriage may obtain a dissolution of marriage, only".

8 3. Page 6, by inserting after line 8, the  
9 following:

10 "1A. In all proceedings for dissolution of  
11 marriage pursuant to subsection 1, the court may issue  
12 an order of temporary support and maintenance during  
13 the pendency of the proceedings. Notwithstanding the  
14 time period requirements of the grounds specified  
15 pursuant to subsection 1, paragraph "c" or "e", a  
16 party to a covenant marriage may petition the court  
17 for separate support and maintenance prior to the  
18 elapsing of the specified time period."

19 4. Page 6, lines 9 and 10, by striking the words  
20 "separate support and maintenance or".

21 5. Page 6, lines 23 and 24, by striking the words  
22 "separate support and maintenance or".

23 6. Page 6, lines 29 and 30, by striking the words  
24 "or order of separate support and maintenance relating  
25 to".

26 7. By renumbering as necessary.

**By** COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES  
JOHN REDWINE, Chairperson

**S-3190** FILED MARCH 20, 2001

## SENATE FILE 353

S-3210

1 Amend Senate File 353 as follows

2 1. By striking everything after the enacting  
3 clause, and inserting the following:

4 "Section 1. Section 331.605, subsection 5, Code  
5 2001, is amended to read as follows:

6 6. a. (1) ~~For Except as provided in subparagraph~~  
7 ~~(2), for filing an application for the license to~~  
8 ~~marry, thirty-five seventy dollars, which includes~~  
9 ~~payment for one certified copy of the original~~  
10 ~~certificate of marriage, to be issued following filing~~  
11 ~~of the original certificate of marriage, four dollars~~  
12 ~~of which shall be retained by the county pursuant to~~  
13 ~~subsection 5.~~

14 (2) ~~For filing an application for the license to~~  
15 ~~marry, five dollars, if the applicants submit and the~~  
16 ~~county registrar approves the certificate of~~  
17 ~~completion of premarital education pursuant to section~~  
18 ~~595.3B. The fee includes payment for one certified~~  
19 ~~copy of the original certificate of marriage, to be~~  
20 ~~issued following filing of the original certificate of~~  
21 ~~marriage, which fee shall be retained by the county~~  
22 ~~pursuant to subsection 5.~~

23 b. For issuing an application for an order of the  
24 district court authorizing the validation of a license  
25 to marry before the expiration of ~~three thirty days~~  
26 ~~from the date of issuance of the license, five~~  
27 ~~dollars. The district court shall authorize the early~~  
28 ~~validation of a marriage license without the payment~~  
29 ~~of any fees imposed in this subsection upon showing~~  
30 ~~that the applicant is unable to pay the fees.~~

31 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 595.3B APPLICATION FOR  
32 PREMARITAL EDUCATION.

33 1. An application form for a marriage license  
34 shall have attached a certificate form to be used by  
35 the parties to document completion of premarital  
36 education by the parties. The certificate shall be  
37 completed by the parties and signed by the person who  
38 provided the premarital education. The certificate  
39 shall require provision of all of the following  
40 information:

41 a. The name of the person providing the premarital  
42 education and the person's signature verifying  
43 completion of the premarital education by the parties.

44 b. The number of hours of premarital education  
45 completed.

46 c. Whether the premarital education was provided  
47 by personal instruction, videotaped instruction,  
48 instruction via other electronic media, or a  
49 combination of these methods.

50 2. Only premarital education provided by the

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1 following persons meet the requirements of provision  
2 of premarital education under this section:

3 a. A person ordained or designated as a leader of  
4 a party's religious faith.

5 b. A person licensed to practice psychology  
6 pursuant to chapter 154B.

7 c. A person licensed to practice social work  
8 pursuant to chapter 154C.

9 d. A person licensed to practice marital and  
10 family therapy pursuant to chapter 154D.

11 3. If the parties applying for a license to marry  
12 complete the premarital education certificate and the  
13 certificate is approved, the parties shall pay a fee  
14 of only five dollars pursuant to section 331.605,  
15 subsection 6.

16 Sec. 3. Section 595.4, Code 2001, is amended to  
17 read as follows:

18 595.4 AGE AND QUALIFICATION -- VERIFIED  
19 APPLICATION -- WAITING PERIOD -- EXCEPTION.

20 1. Previous to the issuance of any license to  
21 marry, the parties desiring the license shall sign and  
22 file a verified application with the county registrar  
23 which application either may be mailed to the parties  
24 at their request or may be signed by them at the  
25 office of the county registrar in the county in which  
26 the license is to be issued. The application shall  
27 include the social security number of each applicant  
28 and shall set forth at least one affidavit of some  
29 competent and disinterested person stating the facts  
30 as to age and qualification of the parties. Upon the  
31 filing of the application for a license to marry, the  
32 county registrar shall file the application in a  
33 record kept for that purpose and shall take all  
34 necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of the  
35 social security number of each applicant. All  
36 information included on an application may be provided  
37 as mutually agreed upon by the division of records and  
38 statistics and the child support recovery unit,  
39 including by automated exchange.

40 2. Upon receipt of a verified application, the  
41 county registrar may issue the license ~~which shall not~~  
42 ~~become valid until the expiration of three days after~~  
43 ~~the date of issuance of the license.~~ If the license  
44 has not been issued within six months from the date of  
45 the application, the application is void.

46 3. A license that is issued under subsection 2,  
47 shall become valid as follows:

48 a. If the parties desiring the license have  
49 participated in premarital education and have  
50 documented completion of premarital education in

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1 accordance with section 595.3B, the license shall  
2 become valid upon the date of issuance of the license.

3 b. If the parties desiring the license have not  
4 participated in premarital education and have not  
5 documented completion of premarital education in  
6 accordance with section 595.3B, the license shall not  
7 become valid until the expiration of thirty days after  
8 the date of issuance of the license.

9 4. A license to marry may be validated prior to  
10 the expiration of ~~three~~ thirty days from the date of  
11 issuance of the license in cases of emergency or  
12 extraordinary circumstances. An order authorizing the  
13 validation of a license may be granted by a judge of  
14 the district court under conditions of emergency or  
15 extraordinary circumstances upon application of the  
16 parties filed with the county registrar. No order may  
17 be granted unless the parties have filed an  
18 application for a marriage license in a county within  
19 the judicial district. An application for an order  
20 shall be made on forms furnished by the county  
21 registrar at the same time the application for the  
22 license to marry is made. After examining the  
23 application for the marriage license and issuing the  
24 license, the county registrar shall refer the parties  
25 to a judge of the district court for action on the  
26 application for an order authorizing the validation of  
27 a marriage license prior to expiration of ~~three~~ thirty  
28 days from the date of issuance of the license. The  
29 judge shall, if satisfied as to the existence of an  
30 emergency or extraordinary circumstances, grant an  
31 order authorizing the validation of a license to marry  
32 prior to the expiration of ~~three~~ thirty days from the  
33 date of issuance of the license to marry. The county  
34 registrar shall validate a license to marry upon  
35 presentation by the parties of the order authorizing a  
36 license to be validated. A fee of five dollars shall  
37 be paid to the county registrar at the time the  
38 application for the order is made, which fee is in  
39 addition to the fee prescribed by law for the issuance  
40 of a marriage license."

41 2. Title page, line 1, by striking the words  
42 "establishing covenant" and inserting the following:  
43 "relating to".

44 3. Title page, lines 1 and 2, by striking the  
45 words "and providing an effective date".

By STEVEN D. HANSEN

S-3210 FILED MARCH 21, 2001

**SENATE FILE 353**

**S-3281**

- 1 Amend Senate File 353 as follows:
- 2 1. Page 6, by inserting after line 8, the
- 3 following:
- 4 "f. The other party has habitually abused drugs or
- 5 alcohol."

**By JACK HOLVECK**

**S-3281 FILED APRIL 2, 2001**

**SENATE FILE 353**

**S-3282**

- 1 Amend Senate File 353 as follows:
- 2 1. Page 6, by inserting after line 8, the
- 3 following:
- 4 "f. The parties both agree to a dissolution of
- 5 marriage."

**By JACK HOLVECK**

**S-3282 FILED APRIL 2, 2001**

**SENATE FILE 353  
FISCAL NOTE****REQUESTED BY:  
SENATOR SCHUERER**

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A fiscal note for **Senate File 353** is hereby submitted pursuant to Joint Rule 17. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau to members of the Legislature upon request.

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Senate File 353 establishes the procedure and requirements for a covenant marriage. The Bill requires the county registrar to provide each applicant for a marriage license with an informational pamphlet on covenant marriage, prepared by the Office of the Attorney General. Senate File 353 requires that the parties to a covenant marriage complete at least 12 hours of premarital education. The Court shall order parties to a covenant marriage, who are seeking a dissolution, to complete at least 12 hours of marriage counseling. Senate File 353 provides a procedure for an existing marriage to be designated a covenant marriage. The Bill provides the exclusive grounds for obtaining support and maintenance or dissolution of a covenant marriage.

**ASSUMPTIONS**

1. Senate File 353 provides that a covenant marriage is discretionary on the part of the applicants.
2. County Recorder's Offices are required to perform additional duties. These duties include providing the Covenant Marriage Option pamphlet, and explaining the procedures for a covenant marriage, to each marriage applicant; reformatting the marriage application; and additional record storage requirements.
3. Any costs of the required counseling shall be paid by the marriage applicants or the parties seeking dissolution of the marriage.
4. There are approximately 23,000 applications for marriage annually.
5. The Office of the Attorney General is required to provide a Covenant Marriage Option pamphlet to county registrars, ministers, marriage and family counselors, justices, judges, and magistrates.
6. There will be 50,000 pamphlets distributed annually.
7. The Bill requires the Attorney General's Office to create pamphlets which takes effect upon enactment.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The General Fund fiscal impact of Senate File 353 is approximately \$11,000 annually for the Office of the Attorney General to print and distribute the Covenant Marriage Option pamphlet. This cost also includes pamphlets printed in languages other than English.

Parties to a covenant marriage who are seeking dissolution will be required to appear in District Court. This provision may result in more trials at the District Court level. However, since the covenant marriage provision is optional, the number of covenant marriages which will be dissolved is unknown.

Senate File 353 may also result in increased workloads in County Recorder's

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Offices. Staff will spend more time with each applicant for a covenant marriage, and the Office may incur additional records storage costs. Because it is not known how many covenant marriage applications will be filed in each county, the fiscal impact to County Recorder's Offices cannot be determined.

SOURCES

Office of the Attorney General  
State Court Administrator's Office  
Department of Public Health  
Polk County Recorder Office  
Story County Recorder Office  
Jasper County Recorder Office

H.S.B. 150 (SS, JDD)

FILED MARCH 21, 2001

BY DENNIS PROUTY, FISCAL DIRECTOR