



[HF 2601](#) – Ballot Measures, Contributions by Foreign Nationals (LSB5420HV)
Staff Contact: Joey Lovan (515.242.5925) joey.lovan@legis.iowa.gov
Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

[House File 2601](#) requires the treasurer of a political committee expressly advocating the passage or defeat of a ballot issue that receives a contribution from a donor to obtain an affirmation that the donor is not a foreign national and has not knowingly or willfully accepted funds in excess of \$100,000 in aggregate from one or more foreign nationals within the four years immediately preceding the date the contribution is made.

The Bill also requires a political committee expressly advocating for the passage or defeat of a ballot issue to include with its required reports to the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board (IECDB) an affirmation that the political committee has not knowingly or willfully received, solicited, or accepted contributions from a foreign national or from a donor that has knowingly or willfully accepted funds in excess of \$100,000 in aggregate from one or more foreign nationals within the four years immediately preceding the date the contribution is made.

The Bill prohibits a foreign national from directing, dictating, controlling, or directly or indirectly participating in the decision-making process regarding activities to influence a ballot issue. A foreign national is also prohibited from soliciting, directly or indirectly, the making of a contribution or expenditure by another person to influence a ballot issue.

Any person who knowingly or willfully violates the provisions of the Bill is guilty of a serious misdemeanor and is subject to a civil penalty of \$10,000 or three times the amount of the contribution or expenditure, whichever is greater. The civil penalty is to be collected by the IECDB and deposited into the General Fund.

Background

A serious misdemeanor is punishable by confinement for no more than one year and a fine of at least \$430 but no more than \$2,560.

Assumptions

- All reports filed pursuant to the Bill will be filed using the IECDB's Web Reporting System (WRS).
- One-time programming costs to update the WRS will cost approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000.
- The following will not change over the projection period: charge, conviction, and sentencing patterns and trends; prisoner length of stay (LOS); revocation rates; plea bargaining; and other criminal justice system policies and practices.
- County jail data is unavailable. For purposes of this analysis, the marginal cost for county jails is assumed to be \$50 per day.
- Conviction data reflects the total number of convictions in adult court, which may include multiple convictions per individual. Not all convictions lead to incarceration, and there may

be a delay between conviction and prison admission, which can contribute to differences in totals.

- A six-month delay is assumed from the effective date of the Bill to the date the first offender will enter the correctional system.
- Offender-based convictions are a count of individuals convicted of the same offense. Each offender is counted only once per Iowa Code section, regardless of the number of individual convictions.
- Admissions are a count of individuals newly admitted to the Department of Corrections (DOC) for supervision during a selected time period, based on the most serious offense committed.

Correctional Impact

House File 2601 creates a new offense within Iowa Code chapter 68A. The correctional impact of the Bill cannot be determined because the number of new convictions cannot be estimated. Refer to the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) memo addressed to the General Assembly, [Cost Estimates Used for Correctional Impact Statements](#), dated January 12, 2026, for information related to the correctional system. **Figure 1** shows estimates for sentencing to State prison, parole, probation, or Community-Based Corrections (CBC) residential facilities; LOS in months under those supervisions; and supervision marginal costs per day for a serious misdemeanor.

Figure 1 — Sentencing Estimates and LOS in Months

| Conviction Offense Class | Percent Ordered to State Prison | FY 2025 Avg LOS in Prison (All Releases) | Marginal Cost Per Day Prison | Percent Ordered to Probation | FY 2025 Field Avg LOS on Probation | Avg Cost Per Day Probation | Marginal Cost Per Day CBC | Marginal Cost Per Day Jail | FY 2025 Field Avg LOS on Parole | Marginal Cost Per Day Parole |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Serious Misdemeanor | 2.3% | 7.3 | \$23.07 | 44.8% | 21.0 | \$8.00 | \$16.35 | \$50.00 | N/A | \$8.00 |

Minority Impact

House File 2601 creates a new offense within Iowa Code chapter 68A. The minority impact of the Bill cannot be determined because the number of new convictions cannot be estimated. Refer to the LSA memo addressed to the General Assembly, [Minority Impact Statements](#), dated January 12, 2026, for information related to minorities in the criminal justice system.

Fiscal Impact

House File 2601 creates a new offense within Iowa Code chapter 68A, and the number of convictions is unknown. The average State cost per serious misdemeanor is between \$350 and \$6,200. This includes operating costs incurred by the Judicial Branch, the Indigent Defense Fund, and the DOC. Any cost increase or decrease would be incurred across multiple fiscal years for prison and parole supervision.

House File 2601 will also require one-time programming costs to the IECDDB between \$10,000 and \$15,000 to update the WRS to include affirmation statements pursuant to the Bill.

Sources

Division of Data, Planning, and Improvement (DPI), Department of Management (DOM)
Department of Corrections
Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board

/s/ Jennifer Acton

March 11, 2026

Doc ID 1602457

The Fiscal Note for this Bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this Fiscal Note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.
