

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 479

BY REPRESENTATIVE KNOX

CRIMINAL/JUSTICE: Creates the Fiscal Truth in Sentencing Act

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 44 of Title 13 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised
3 of R.S. 13:6001, relative to fiscal truth in sentencing; to provide for duties of clerks
4 of court and the legislative auditor; to provide for reports on budgets; to provide for
5 civil immunity; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. Chapter 44 of Title 13 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,
8 comprised of R.S. 13:6001, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 CHAPTER 44. FISCAL TRUTH IN SENTENCING ACT

10 §6001. Fiscal Truth in Sentencing Act; creation, authority, and duties

11 A. The Fiscal Truth in Sentencing Act is established in this Chapter to assist
12 the legislative budgeting process and provide public transparency of financing the
13 criminal justice system.

14 B. For the purposes of this Act, each district clerk of court has the following
15 duties and obligations:

16 (1) Each district clerk of court responsible for maintaining criminal records
17 shall provide the legislative auditor with no less than quarterly reports with
18 sentencing data, as defined in Subsection C of this Section, for the purpose of state

1 budget projections, as of the effective date of this Chapter. The provisions of this
2 Paragraph do not apply to traffic violations.

3 (2)(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, including
4 but not limited to Children's Code Article 412, each district clerk of court and the
5 clerk of the Juvenile Court for the parish of Orleans as defined in R.S. 13:1587.1,
6 who is responsible for juvenile court records shall transmit to the legislative auditor,
7 no less than quarterly, reports with sentencing data as defined in Subsection C of this
8 Section of all cases involving juveniles sentenced to incarceration. No other records
9 or images, other than sentencing data as defined in Section C, are required to be
10 transmitted in accordance with this Section.

11 (b) The provisions of this Paragraph are applicable only to sentences issued
12 on or after August 1, 2026.

13 C. For the purposes of this Chapter, the term "sentencing data" includes but
14 is not limited to the following:

15 (1) The number of individuals sentenced to confinement per judge presiding.

16 (2) The total number of years of confinement per judge presiding.

17 (3) For each person sentenced to twenty years or more, their age at the time
18 of sentencing.

19 D. The Division of Administration shall report to the legislative auditor by
20 October fifteenth of each year the final budget figures for the prior fiscal year for the
21 following budget units:

22 (1) Department of Public Safety and Corrections - Corrections Services.

23 (2) Department of Public Safety and Corrections - office of juvenile justice.

24 (3) Department of Public Safety and Corrections - Municipal Police
25 Supplemental Payments and Deputy Sheriffs' Supplemental Payments.

26 (4) Office of the state public defender.

27 (5) The Judiciary.

28 (6) District Attorneys and Assistant District Attorneys.

1 E. The legislative auditor shall provide an annual report to the House
2 Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance no later than
3 December fifteenth of each year. The report shall project the five-year incarceration
4 costs using the aggregated sentencing data provided pursuant to Subsection B of this
5 Section, along with any other relevant data including but not limited to the following:

6 (1) Budget data collected pursuant to Subsection D of this Section.

7 (2) Appropriations in the most recently enacted comprehensive capital
8 budget for construction and improvements of prisons and jails.

9 (3) Appropriations in the most recently enacted state budget for state debt
10 service related to prisons and jails.

11 (4) Civil judgments and damages awarded in cases related to prisons and
12 jails.

13 (5) The Corrections Primary and Secondary Plan within the Louisiana State
14 Employees' Retirement System.

15 (6) Using the aggregated data, an estimated average cost to incarcerate a
16 person in this state per reporting year.

17 E. Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, the clerks of court
18 and their employees and agents; the legislative auditor, including its employees and
19 agents; and any other state or local entity or political subdivision that is responsible
20 for providing information to the clerks of court shall be immune from liability arising
21 from any acts or omissions related to compliance with the provisions of this Section.

22 The provisions of this Section shall not be construed to limit, withdraw, or overturn
23 any other applicable defense or immunity available to public officials or public
24 entities.

25 F. Reporting by clerks shall commence with the last quarter of 2026, and at
26 the conclusion of every quarter thereafter.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 479 Original

2026 Regular Session

Knox

Abstract: Requires clerks of courts and the legislative auditor to provide reports to the legislature regarding sentencing costs and budgets.

Proposed law requires clerks of court to submit quarterly reports to the legislative auditor containing sentencing data such as: the number of individuals sentenced, the total number of years sentenced, and the ages of people sentenced to 20 years or more.

Proposed law requires the legislative auditor to provide an annual report to the House Committee on Appropriations projecting five-year incarceration costs using data from the quarterly report submitted by the clerks of court.

Proposed law provides immunity to the clerks of court and legislative auditor for acts and omissions related to complying with proposed law.

Proposed law requires clerks to report beginning with the last quarter of 2026 and at the conclusion of each quarter thereafter.

(Adds R.S. 13:6001)