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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**LAST UPDATED** \_\_\_\_\_

**SPONSOR** Pinto/Charley **ORIGINAL DATE** 2/21/2025

**BILL**

**SHORT TITLE** Tribal Liaison Programs **NUMBER** Senate Bill 468

**ANALYST** Ortega

**APPROPRIATION\***  
(dollars in thousands)

| FY25 | FY26       | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|------|------------|---------------------------|---------------|
|      | \$33,000.0 | Recurring                 | General Fund  |

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.  
\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\***  
(dollars in thousands)

| Agency/Program | FY25             | FY26          | FY27          | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| <b>DFA</b>     | No fiscal impact | Up to \$387.8 | Up to \$387.8 | Up to \$775.6     | Recurring                 | General Fund  |

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.  
\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From  
Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

Agency Analysis was Solicited but Not Received From  
Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Bill 468

Senate Bill 468 (SB468) appropriates \$33 million from the general fund to the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) in FY26 for the purpose of funding a tribal liaison program in each county to ensure Native American populations have equal access to the electoral process through voter education, awareness, translation services, and registration drives.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The appropriation of \$33 million contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY26 shall revert to the general fund. Although SB468 does not specify future appropriations, establishing a new program could create an expectation the program will continue in future fiscal years; therefore, this cost is assumed to be recurring.

According to DFA, the implementation of a tribal liaison program in each county will result in administrative costs related to fund management, program evaluation and monitoring, community engagement, and reporting. These costs include staff salaries, office expenses, financial management systems, site visits, data analysis, training, translation services, and community outreach. DFA estimates that administering these programs will require a total cost of \$387.8 thousand for 3 FTE at a level 75 pay band. Each FTE is projected to cost \$129.3 thousand, including salary, benefits, onboarding, and operational expenses.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The bill does not outline specific qualifications, duties, or reporting requirements for the tribal liaison programs, which could lead to inconsistencies in implementation across counties.

DFA states that it is not the appropriate agency to administer this program and believes that the Indian Affairs Department would be a more suitable entity. According to the department, the Local Government Division within DFA has limited expertise with Native American populations and no experience with the electoral process or providing translation services. DFA also notes that a program of this scale would require more than a single fiscal year to hire staff, conduct necessary research, survey impacted communities, develop program criteria, implement translation services, and conduct outreach.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

As noted by DFA:

Overall, SB468's administrative implications involve significant responsibilities for the Local Government Division in terms of review, execution, administration, and monitoring of the new tribal electoral process program as well as outreach, financial oversight, and reporting. These tasks will require adequate staffing, resources, and coordination to ensure the effective implementation and management of these funds.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

DFA suggested the following alternative:

An alternative to appropriating these funds to the Local Government Division would be appropriating to the Indian Affairs Department, which currently administers a Tribal Liaison program, or possibly the Secretary of State's office who has the knowledge needed of the electoral process to provide to the Native American population.