

SESSION OF 2024

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 284**

As Amended by Senate Committee on Utilities

**Brief\***

SB 284, as amended, would create the Blind Information Access Act.

***Contract for Services***

The bill would require the State Librarian to estimate the cost of entering into a contract with an organization that delivers on-demand information access services (services) to persons who are blind, visually impaired, deafblind, print disabled, or who have another disability. The services would provide access to digital content through:

- Audio;
- Electronic text and braille reading technologies; and
- Other related services, including, but not limited to:
  - Kansas-specific publications;
  - National publications;
  - International publications;
  - Breaking news sources; and
  - Localized emergency weather alerts.

The services would be provided using telecommunication services or internet services.

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

The State Librarian would be required to submit a report to the Legislature and the Kansas Corporation Commission on or before November 1 of each year that would specify the estimate of the cost to enter into such a contract.

### ***Funding for Services***

The bill would require the State Librarian to certify the cost to enter into or renew such a contract to the Director of Accounts and Reports and the Administrator of the Kansas Universal Service Fund (KUSF).

Upon receipt of the certification, the KUSF Administration would make transfers, in 12 equal monthly payments, from the KUSF to the State Treasurer, who would credit that amount to the Blind Information Access Fund, which would be created by the bill.

The bill would require that upon receipt of the certified amount for the services, the State Librarian would enter into or renew the contract for services.

### ***Conforming and Technical Amendments***

The bill would make conforming amendments to allow for KUSF moneys to be used for services contracted pursuant to New Section 1 of the bill.

The bill would also remove provisions of appropriations acts for fiscal year 2013 and language pertaining to actions taken by the State Treasurer and the Kan-ed Fund.

### **Background**

The bill was introduced by the Senate Committee on Ways and Means at the request of Senator Pittman on behalf of Senator Ware.

### ***Senate Committee on Utilities***

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Senator Ware and two representatives of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas. The proponents provided an overview of the different services that would be made available through the State Library by enactment of the bill and discussed information access funding issues.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by a representative of Envision and 18 private citizens.

Neutral testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas Corporation Commission. The representative requested three technical amendments.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by a representative of the State Librarian.

No other testimony was provided.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to:

- Change the date on which the State Librarian is required to submit an annual expenditures report to on or before November 1, and include the Kansas Corporation Commission as an entity to receive such report;
- Require the KUSF Administrator to transfer 12 equal monthly payments to the State Treasurer, who then would credit such amount to the Blind Information Access Fund; and
- Make technical amendments.

## **Fiscal Note**

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, the State Library indicates enactment of the bill would increase its annual expenditures by \$99,000 from the Blind Information Access Fund beginning in FY 2024. The agency's estimate includes \$30,000 to contract with an organization to deliver on-demand information access services; \$54,000 in salaries and wages for 1.0 FTE (full-time equivalent) position to promote information access services to eligible individuals; and \$15,000 for expenses associated with outreach, periodical subscriptions, and administrative costs.

The Kansas Corporation Commission indicated enactment of the bill would have a negligible fiscal effect on its operations.

Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2024 Governor's Budget Report*.

Disability services; telecommunication and information access services; Blind Information Access Act; State Librarian; blind; visually impaired; deafblind; Kansas Universal Service Fund; Kansas Corporation Commission