

HB 1605-FN-A - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2378

06/08

HOUSE BILL ***1605-FN-A***

AN ACT establishing a state office for intelligence and counterintelligence within the executive branch.

SPONSORS: Rep. Belcher, Carr. 4; Rep. Sabourin dit Choiniere, Rock. 30; Rep. Terry, Belk. 7

COMMITTEE: Executive Departments and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill establishes the state intelligence and counter-intelligence office within the department of safety.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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1 III. The office shall coordinate with federal fusion centers but shall retain independent
2 authority to conduct separate assessments to ensure objectivity and to identify threats not otherwise
3 addressed.

4 IV. Information sharing with federal fusion centers shall be limited to verified, non-sensitive
5 data that meets reasonable suspicion criteria under 28 C.F.R. part 23 and complies with RSA 21-
6 U:6. The office shall not transmit personal identifying information or intelligence derived from state
7 sources unless independently corroborated. Information received from fusion centers shall be
8 adjudicated through an internal review process, including cross-verification against state sources
9 and assessment for potential bias or subversion, as defined in department rules.

10 4 Appropriation. There is hereby appropriated to the department of safety the sum of
11 \$6,000,000 for the biennium ending June 30, 2027, for the purpose of establishing and operating the
12 state intelligence and counter-intelligence office under this act, including salaries, benefits, training,
13 equipment, such as secure air-gapped and online networks, nondescript surveillance vehicles, an
14 unarmed aerial surveillance platform, and night vision or thermal imaging devices, or both, and
15 operational costs. The appropriation shall be drawn first from any available general fund surplus or
16 lapsed funds from prior appropriations, as determined by the commissioner of administrative
17 services in consultation with the legislative budget assistant. If such funds are insufficient, the
18 balance shall be drawn from the general fund. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said
19 sum out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated. Any unexpended funds shall not
20 lapse and shall be available for the purposes of this act in subsequent fiscal years.

21 5 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

**HB -FN-A- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT establishing a state office for intelligence and counterintelligence within the executive branch.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	\$1,721,000 to \$32,000,000	\$1,088,000+	\$1,102,000+
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill establishes the State Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence Office (Office) within the Department of Safety and provides \$6,000,000 in general funds for operating the Office, including salaries, benefits, training, equipment, and operational costs.

The Department has provided the following assumptions relative to this bill:

- The creation of this Office would be duplicative to the efforts that have existed since 2010 with the passing of NH RSA 651-F, which created the New Hampshire Information and Analysis Center (NHIAC). The New Hampshire Information and Analysis Center provides an integrated, all-crimes/all-hazards information sharing network to collect, analyze and disseminate information derived from multiple sources to stakeholders in a timely manner, to protect the citizens and the critical infrastructure of New Hampshire.
 - The NHIAC has long standing partnerships with the National Fusion Center Association, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Intelligence and Analysis which is embedded within the NHIAC, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Joint Terrorism Task Force for which a Trooper is already assigned as a full time Task Force Officer. The Division of State Police also has a Terrorism and Intelligence Unit assigned within the NHIAC. These offices

already share counterintelligence information with federal, state, local, tribal and territorial partners.

- o Additionally, the NHIAC has a dedicated Counterterrorism Consultant assigned to the center. The consultant’s defined role is to provide intelligence regarding but not limited to foreign and domestic terrorist organizations, extremist organizations, cyber threats, infrastructure security, and counterintelligence and foreign threat intelligence. It is important to identify that this consultant is a civilian employee who does not conduct criminal investigations pertaining to any of the information that is shared.
- Further conversation would need to be held to determine what authority the proposed Office would have to investigate the crimes defined in the bill such as Terrorism or Espionage as those crimes fall under the jurisdiction of a federal law enforcement authority.

The Department states several areas of the potential fiscal impact of this bill are clear, while others remain uncertain and require additional analysis. The Department can reasonably estimate certain position and equipment costs; however, the operational and technical requirements associated with unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and specialized counterintelligence functions introduce significant unknowns:

Description	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
<u>Personnel Costs (Including Equipment)</u> Four (4) Analyst Positions (SOC 13-06, Step 6) Four (4) Investigator Positions (SOC 33P-06, Step 6) One (1) Support Staff (SOC 43-04, Step 6)	\$1,721,000	\$1,088,000	\$1,102,000
Night Vision Goggles	Approximately \$8,500 per unit, with an additional \$1,000 per unit per fiscal year for recalibration and maintenance		
Commercial UAS Units	Approximately \$10,000 per unit for small-scale, commercially available drones		
Facilities and Operations	The Department states that estimates could developed for office space, vehicles, and training programs (not yet provided)		
<u>Specialized UAS Operations</u> The bill’s described functionality suggests use of advanced or military-grade UAS platforms, which require licensed and contracted operators. The cost of such systems varies widely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military-Grade UAS: \$85,000–\$100,000 per unit based on current market searches. - Advanced Platforms (e.g., MQ-9 Reaper): Estimated at approximately \$30,000,000 per unit. - Operational Costs: Range from \$10 to over \$10,000 per flight hour, depending on mission complexity and platform capability. 			

Mission-Specific Requirements

Without defined operational parameters, it is not possible to accurately forecast the level of staffing, training, or support infrastructure needed. Given these uncertainties, a capabilities and resource assessment should be conducted to determine the operational scope, staffing model, and equipment needs required to establish a standalone State Intelligence and Counterintelligence Office as outlined in the bill. This analysis would ensure that future fiscal estimates are data-driven and aligned with the intended mission and scale of operations.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Safety