

Fiscal Estimate - 2001 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 01-4057/1	Introduction Number SB-299
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Subject
 Increasing the appropriation for the state hygiene laboratory

Fiscal Effect

State:

<input type="checkbox"/> No State Fiscal Effect	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Revenues	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Costs - May be possible to absorb within agency's budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Indeterminate	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Revenues	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Existing Appropriations	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Revenues	<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Costs
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Existing Appropriations		
<input type="checkbox"/> Create New Appropriations		

Local:

<input type="checkbox"/> No Local Government Costs	5. Types of Local Government Units Affected	
<input type="checkbox"/> Indeterminate	<input type="checkbox"/> Towns	<input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Cities
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Counties	<input type="checkbox"/> Others
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	<input type="checkbox"/> School Districts	<input type="checkbox"/> WTCS Districts
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Costs		
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory		
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Revenue		
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory		
4. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Revenue		
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory		

Fund Sources Affected	Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GPR <input type="checkbox"/> FED <input type="checkbox"/> PRO <input type="checkbox"/> PRS <input type="checkbox"/> SEG <input type="checkbox"/> SEGS 20.285(1)(fd)	

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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

UWS 11/12/01

LRB Number	01-4057/1	Introduction Number	SB-299	Estimate Type	Original
Subject					
Increasing the appropriation for the state hygiene laboratory					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

The public health laboratory is a critical component of national and state surveillance for chemical and biological terrorism. Since early October, when Anthrax was first found in Florida and later in Washington, D.C., the

Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) has tested more than 430 environmental and 40 clinical specimens for Bacillus Anthracis. Prior to this time, the WSLH had performed few tests for this agent, though they had developed the capability and were ready to respond when the event happened. To handle the workload, the WSLH has diverted more than 15 people from their routine testing and administrative responsibilities to manage this public health emergency.

Local public health laboratories, local law enforcement officers and HazMat teams represent the first responders in their communities. The WSLH has worked with these groups over the past several years to develop protocols and provide training on management of dangerous biological agents. This training enables the first responders to react properly not only when they are dealing with a potential terrorist event, but also when encountering other new or emerging infectious agents, such as E. Coli and West Nile Virus. During this current public health emergency, the WSLH received many phone calls from local officials to provide case-by-case guidance prior to collecting samples. Once collected, suspicious packages, including letters, food, full garbage bags, electrical equipment, powders and other challenging samples are delivered from throughout Wisconsin by local law enforcement or by a commercial carrier who is on contract to the WSLH. These samples must be tested quickly so that businesses and citizens may return to their normal routines, and fear and panic are contained. Each sample is unique and takes up to 2 hours to properly prepare, test and report, following a standard chain-of-custody procedure. This has required that the WSLH, whose normal work hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday, to provide 24 hour/7 day a week coverage. (Note: educational classes, businesses, and governmental activities have been suspended awaiting test results.) Overtime and on-call pay have been given to staff who are called upon to work above and beyond their normal 40 hours/week. For the period October 14 through November 3, 2001, the WSLH has paid \$8,715 in overtime to staff. (Special Note: Working greater than a 40 hour work week causes fatigue and stress and results in management concern for personnel safety.)

The WSLH is a member of the national Laboratory Response Network (LRN), which was established to help public health laboratories prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism. Three other Wisconsin laboratories work with the WSLH to act as Level B laboratories for our state. They are: Zablocki Veteran's Administration Hospital Laboratory-Milwaukee, Milwaukee City Health Department Laboratory and Marshfield Clinic Laboratory-Marshfield. Participation in the LRN means the Level B laboratories are capable of testing for dangerous biologic agents such as Anthrax, Botulism, Plague, Tularemia and Brucellosis. (While the cost of an environmental test is about \$150/sample, none of the Level B labs receive direct funding for these emergency testing functions.)

In addition to testing responsibilities, the WSLH is responsible for providing training to Level A laboratories, i.e. local hospital laboratories and/or emergency room facilities, in our state so that they can recognize and respond to patients who may have been exposed to one of these agents. While the WSLH had trained 40 of the 125 laboratories in Wisconsin, the WSLH must quickly convey instruction to the remainder. This means that telecommunications will be used initially, but one-on-one, on-site training must follow to assure quality of the learning process.

Though the WSLH is technically prepared to analyze biological specimens, they are far less ready to manage chemical agents of terrorism. The likelihood that chemical agents may be used is high. Unlike biological agents, chemical agents can produce immediate effects; are cheap, easy to use and can be rapidly dispersed. The WSLH, and its public health partners, need to prepare an appropriate response plan now.

Assumptions Used In Arriving at Fiscal Estimate-General

1. Terrorist events, both biological and chemical, will continue into our future.
2. Covering extraordinary workload through staff over-time is not an acceptable solution in the long term. Laboratory work requires staff to be careful and precise; weary employees can become a safety risk to themselves and others.
3. Chemical terrorism is a likely event as well. The State of Wisconsin, including the WSLH, needs to expedite development of a contingency plan, acquire necessary testing and sampling equipment, train staff, and coordinate with other public health system partners.
4. Funding via CDC, thus far, falls short of covering capacity to cope with a real terrorism situation in which the public health system now finds itself.
5. Other testing activities cannot be disrupted as they affect the health and well-being of citizens too. For example:
WSLH will continue to respond to public health outbreaks, such as E.Coli contamination. (See attached summary of Outbreak Activities for the past 6 months.)
CDC is predicting an early and intense flu season. The WSLH is the lead laboratory in the Wisconsin Virus Laboratory Network.
West Nile Virus is now in Wisconsin's bird population. The WSLH needs to assume that the human population will be affected as early as Spring 2002.

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate-Specific

Personnel:

Additional personnel are needed to sustain the increased demand for laboratory testing, data management, and coordination with other public health systems partners. 2.0 FTE Microbiologists

A security specialist is needed to monitor visitors to the laboratory, receive samples and assist law enforcement officials in completing chain-of-evidence forms.

Anticipated overtime and on-call expenses.

Even with the hiring of staff to cover a second shift, the WSLH anticipates continued overtime for staff who will be on call 24/7. In the event of a "positive Anthrax test result" in Wisconsin, the demand for primary and confirmatory clinical testing will increase. A fast turn around time is necessary so that appropriate treatments can be started. On call rates are \$20/8 hour shift plus hourly salary if non-represented staff report to work. (Note: Standard laboratory safety procedures require a minimum of 2 people in the lab while working with infectious or hazardous agents.) (Note: The cost of paid overtime for the period October 14-20 was \$4,787.

Travel/Training

Only 40 of the 125 Level A labs in Wisconsin have received training to date. The new plan is to expedite the one-on-one, on-site training through the use of 3 teleconferences reinforced by 10 regional training sessions. In order to keep the Level A labs, local public health departments, HazMat and other first responders apprised of any changes in protocols, the WSLH plans to hold 6 other teleconferences during the year. The WSLH is also planning 10 visits to Level A or B labs and/or local health departments to do troubleshooting or quality assurance reviews.

Supplies and Materials & Shipping Expenses.

Biological samples-human and environmental-require special handling. Some samples can be safely transported through the mail, if packaged in appropriate containers. The WSLH plans to provide each local health department, and area HazMat units with a minimum of 3 biological shipping containers and 2 dangerous goods shippers. When the WSLH receives a sample from the LHD, they replace it with a new container. Containers should not be reused. Consequently, this estimate could be higher in the future.

Thus far, many samples have been personally delivered to the WSLH by local law enforcement agencies. However, the WSLH has established, for Local Health Departments only, an account with Dunham Express for delivery of samples to the WSLH; costs are being absorbed by the WSLH. The cost of these shipments are difficult to estimate as they depend on number, distance and time. In the event of a large event, the number of samples to be tested could increase dramatically. (Note: Cost for Dunham delivery for the period October 19-25 is about \$2,500)

Reimbursement to Level B Labs.

The WSLH plus three other labs-VA-Zablocki in Milwaukee, Marshfield Clinic Lab and City of Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory (MHDL)-have been working together to prepare for testing of potential terrorist agents. None of the labs has received funding for the testing they are doing currently. While it may be appropriate in the future to fund 2-3 new positions in these laboratories, this fiscal note proposes to pay them on a per-test basis.

(The national Association of Public Health Laboratories has calculated that the average cost to test an environmental sample for Anthrax is \$150/sample.)

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

The WSLH expects fiscal support could exceed \$250,000 in the current fiscal year if the level of laboratory testing for terrorism-related events continues at the current pace. (Worst case estimates of annual need approach \$1,000,000) Because of the critical role played by the WSLH and the support the WSLH provides to the other three Laboratory Response Network labs, local health, local law enforcement, and local hospital laboratories, the WSLH anticipates a need for an on-going increase in their appropriation.

Fiscal Estimate Worksheet - 2001 Session

Detailed Estimate of Annual Fiscal Effect

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Subject			
Increasing the appropriation for the state hygiene laboratory			
I. One-time Costs or Revenue Impacts for State and/or Local Government (do not include in annualized fiscal effect):			
II. Annualized Costs:		Annualized Fiscal Impact on funds from:	
		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
A. State Costs by Category			
State Operations - Salaries and Fringes	\$120,000		
(FTE Position Changes)			
State Operations - Other Costs	90,375		
Local Assistance			
Aids to Individuals or Organizations	39,625		
TOTAL State Costs by Category	\$250,000		\$
B. State Costs by Source of Funds			
GPR	250,000		
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
III. State Revenues - Complete this only when proposal will increase or decrease state revenues (e.g., tax increase, decrease in license fee, ets.)			
	Increased Rev	Decreased Rev	
GPR Taxes	\$	\$	
GPR Earned			
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
TOTAL State Revenues	\$	\$	
NET ANNUALIZED FISCAL IMPACT			
	<u>State</u>	<u>Local</u>	
NET CHANGE IN COSTS	\$250,000	\$	
NET CHANGE IN REVENUE	\$	\$	
Agency/Prepared By		Authorized Signature	Date
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