

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

CTS 5/3/2007

LRB Number	07-0107/1	Introduction Number	AB-0248	Estimate Type	Original
Description Powers and duties of part-time court commissioners					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill expands the powers of part-time circuit court commissioners. Currently, only full-time circuit court commissioners are allowed to conduct preliminary examinations and arraignments, and, with the consent of both the state and the defendant, accept a guilty plea. This bill would allow a part-time circuit court commissioner to also perform these duties.

In its recent report, "Judicial Needs Assessment 2006," the Director of State Courts office estimated there were approximately 85 full-time equivalent (FTE) circuit court commissioners in the state. The report does not break down the numbers between full-time and part-time commissioners, although more populous counties tend to employ full-time commissioners.

Circuit court commissioners are employed by counties, and the level of compensation is determined at the county level. The duties performed by particular circuit court commissioners are also determined at the local level. If this bill were adopted, the decision whether a county would utilize more circuit court commissioner time, and therefore, incur a greater cost, would be made at the county level. An accurate estimate of the additional costs is impossible with the data available.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications