

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DATCP 10/10/2005

LRB Number	05-3423/1	Introduction Number	AB-696	Estimate Type	Original
Subject					
Prohibit humane society officers from issuing citations					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Summary of Current Law

Currently, chapter 173 defines the authority and responsibilities of humane officers appointed by a political subdivision. In order to carryout these duties and responsibilities an individual must be certified as an eligible humane officer by the state, and be appointed (not employed) by a political subdivision.

Many counties contract with humane societies for services related to animal control. This is done because they have an established infrastructure for dealing with animals and staff that is trained in handling them. It is a good fit to have the humane officer be an employee of the humane society, but appointed by the political subdivision contracting for services.

DATCP does not have information on the number of citations issued by humane officers or any information on the employers of the appointed humane officers. The department certifies them as potential humane officers and is notified when they are appointed by a political subdivision.

Currently, Wisconsin has 80 appointed humane officers. The department estimates that 33% of humane officers are not employed by a political subdivision.

Effect of Legislation

This proposal would provide for these humane officers to still function in every capacity as a humane officer, except for in the area of enforcement. In order for a citation to be issued an employee of the political subdivision with authority to issue citation (i.e., a police officer or deputy) would need to be called upon

Fiscal Impact:

The exact fiscal impact would need to be assessed by individual government units. The actual impact would be a product of multiple variables such as; current arrangements for delegation of animal control activities, hiring and employment associated costs, and average level of animal control issues.

In the short term a political subdivision that contracts for these services, may experience increased costs for these activities. A minimum of two individuals would need to be involved in enforcement of animal licensing, rabies vaccinations, nuisance animals, animal cruelty, animal bite quarantines, and other animal control ordinances. This may also mean that fewer citations would be issued because of non-availability of police or deputies. This may result in a reduction of revenue and enforcement of local animal control ordinances.

After the expiration of existing contracts a political subdivision may be able to directly employ a humane officer for their jurisdiction. Costs associated with hiring and directly employing a humane officer would vary by political subdivision.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications