Fiscal Estimate - 2007 Session

Original Updated	Corrected Supplemental				
LRB Number 07-2726/1	Introduction Number AB-0412				
Description Crimes committed against individuals who are at least 65 years old and providing penalties					
Fiscal Effect					
Appropriations Reve	ease Existing enues ease Existing enues to absorb within agency's budget Pres Decrease Costs				
□ No Local Government Costs 5.Types of Local □ Indeterminate 5.Types of Local 1. ☑ Increase Costs 3. ☐ Increase Revenue ☐ Permissive ☑ Mandatory ☐ Permissive ☐ Mandatory ☐ Decrease Costs 4. ☐ Decrease Revenue ☐ Permissive ☐ Mandatory ☐ School ☐ WTCS ☐ Districts Districts					
Fund Sources Affected Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations GPR FED PRO PRS SEG SEGS					
Agency/Prepared By	Authorized Signature Date				
SPD/ Mike Tobin (608) 266-8259	Krista Ginger (608) 264-8572 6/19/2007				

Fiscal Estimate Narratives SPD 6/20/2007

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Description					
Crimes committed against individuals who are at least 65 years old and providing penalties					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

The State Public Defender (SPD) is statutorily authorized and required to appoint attorneys to represent indigent defendants in criminal proceedings. The SPD plays a major role in ensuring that the Wisconsin justice system complies with the right to counsel provided by both the state and federal constitutions. Any legislation that creates a new criminal offense or expands the definition of an existing criminal offense has the potential to increase SPD costs.

Although this bill does not create a new criminal offense, it would increase the maximum penalties for certain offenses (those in which the victim has attained age 65). The proposed changes could result in additional trials and/or contested sentencing hearings. Also, the bill would convert some misdemeanor offenses to felonies. For FY 2006, the average SPD cost to provide representation in a misdemeanor case was \$228.10, and the comparable average cost for a felony (class D-I) was \$545.60.

The SPD does not have the data to predict the increased costs that could result from the changes proposed in this bill. Neither SPD nor any other Wisconsin justice agency (to our knowledge) systematically tracks the age of adult victims.

Counties are also subject to increased costs when a new crime is created. There are some defendants who, despite exceeding the SPD's statutory financial guidelines, are constitutionally eligible for appointment of counsel because it would be a substantial hardship for them to retain an attorney. The court is required to appoint counsel at county expense for these defendants. Thus, the possibility of additional trials and contested sentencing hearings could add to county costs in cases in which the court appoints the defense attorney. The counties could also incur additional costs associated with longer incarceration of defendants, both pending trial and after sentencing.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications