

Fiscal Estimate - 2007 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 07-0970/1	Introduction Number AB-0250
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Description
 Public financing of campaigns for the office of justice of the supreme court, making appropriations, and providing penalties

Fiscal Effect

State:

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

Local:

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

Fund Sources Affected **Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations**

GPR
 FED
 PRO
 PRS
 SEG
 SEGS 20.511

Agency/Prepared By ELB/ Kevin Kennedy (608) 266-8005	Authorized Signature Kevin Kennedy (608) 266-8005	Date 3/27/2007
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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

ELB 4/9/2007

LRB Number	07-0970/1	Introduction Number	AB-0250	Estimate Type	Original
Description Public financing of campaigns for the office of justice of the supreme court, making appropriations, and providing penalties					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This legislation establishes a means of providing public funds for candidates for Supreme Court Justice in primary and election campaigns through the Democracy Trust Fund, a segregated fund established by the legislation. The legislation establishes detailed criteria for qualifying for and complying publicly funded grants from the Democracy Trust Fund. It also establishes a series of matching grants if a qualified candidate accepting a grant is opposed by a non-qualifying candidate or the qualifying candidate is targeted by a significant amount of independent expenditures.

These detailed criteria will require the dedication of the equivalent of a full time resource to monitor compliance and ensure that all disbursements are timely distributed. The individual assigned to this project will have to audit reports, including special reports mandated by the legislation and direct the State Treasurer to make the proper disbursements in a timely manner. The work would be full time from January of an election for Supreme Court Justice through the following August. In addition, significant time would be dedicated to monitoring reports and determining eligibility from July preceding an election for Supreme Court Justice through December before the election.

Currently the agency has three full-time staff dedicated to auditing all campaign finance reports to ensure compliance with existing regulations. This function has been understaffed for more than a decade as campaign receipts and expenditures have skyrocketed. The addition of a full-time campaign auditor will ensure that the requirements of the legislation are met and enable the agency address a backlog of audits.

An additional campaign auditor will cost approximately \$35,000 in salary, \$14,000 in fringe and \$4,000 in support costs annually. In addition there would be one-time set up costs of \$5,000 for the position. Other one-time costs include \$5,000 for developing and printing forms, manuals and other informational materials which are not currently in the agency budget.

The Democracy Trust Fund would require an infusion of as much as \$2,800,000 in a contested election for Supreme Court Justice. Each qualifying candidate would be eligible for up to \$100,000 in campaign grants for the primary and \$300,000 in campaign grants for the election. If there are three qualifying candidates in the primary and two in the election the total amount of funding required would not exceed \$900,000.

However, if a qualifying candidate is opposed by non-qualifying candidates who exceed the spending limit by more than the amount of the grant, the qualifying candidate could receive an additional \$300,000 in the primary and \$900,000 in the election. If the qualifying candidate is targeted by independent expenditures that exceed the spending limit, the qualifying candidate could receive as much as an additional \$300,000 in the primary and \$900,000 in the election.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Historically only a small number of elections for Supreme Court Justice are contested in a 10 year period. This would limit the amount of funds required for the Democracy Trust Fund over a ten-year cycle. The incentives in the legislation could keep the spending to the scenario where all candidates qualify for public funds. This would increase the administrative impact on the agency staff to track qualification for and adherence with the detailed fundraising and reporting requirements, but would reduce the potential outlay from the Democracy Trust Fund.