

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

CTS 1/9/2012

LRB Number	11-2142/1	Introduction Number	AB-0285	Estimate Type	Original
Description Relating to: municipal court fees					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill increases the upper limit that municipal courts may impose in court costs for actions brought before the court. Currently, municipal courts may impose a fee of not less than \$15 nor more than \$28 for most actions brought before the court. This bill would raise the upper limit that may be imposed from \$28 to \$38.

Of each fee imposed under this section, the municipality pays \$5 to the state for deposit into the general fund. The municipality retains the balance. AB 285 does not change this provision.

As of May 2008 there were 252 municipal courts in Wisconsin. Because each municipality is allowed to set its own level of court costs within the statutory limits, there is no way to predict how much more revenue would be raised under the provisions of this bill.

In 2010 there were 318,211 cases disposed of by forfeiture, default, guilty plea or no contest plea. (This figure is incomplete because not all municipal courts have reported their case totals.) It appears that nearly all of these cases are subject to court costs and thus could be subject to the higher costs allowed by this bill. If all municipal courts were to raise its allowable costs by the full \$10 allowed by this bill, then approximately \$3.18 million would be raised. This also assumes all imposed costs would be collected. All revenue would be retained by the municipalities.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications