

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DOT 10/19/2011

LRB Number	11-3083/1	Introduction Number	SB-007 (SE1)	Estimate Type	Original
Description Seasonal weight limitations for certain vehicles transporting agricultural crops					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

2005 Wisconsin Act 364 governing Wisconsin Statute 348.17 generally replaced what had become rather routine seasonal agricultural emergency declarations. The Act was a product of a cooperative effort among sister agencies and the agriculture industry. The Act provided certain vehicles or vehicle combinations transporting agricultural crops could, without a permit, exceed weight limits by not more than 15 percent from September 1st to November 30th of each year. The Act remedied problems inherent in the older process while retaining essentially the same benefit to the industry as has been provided in the way agricultural emergency provisions were exercised over the last several years. It represented a better way of dealing with the interests of the agricultural community than what existed, and provided for reasonable protection of the highway system.

The fiscal effect is expected to be negligible. Some additional transport at higher weights may be expected, accelerating wear on state and local roads. The proposed changes remove: (a) any unpredictability that a period of time will exist that allows heavier loads; and, (b) restrictions based on specific crops or areas of the state. There is no reliable information available to develop any estimate of these effects. Generally, retaining the current limitations respecting weight limits posted on the roadway and local class B weight designations will protect vulnerable roads from undue damage from transport of these harvest commodities. Further, it is assumed this bill would not affect the number of permits for fruits and vegetables.

The impact of this bill is assumed to be essentially the same as the effect of declaring "agricultural emergencies" on a regular basis for the period December 1st to December 31st. For example, Executive Order #301 was signed on November 25, 2009, extending the seasonal weight exemption in Wisconsin Statutes 348.17(5) to December 30th for calendar year 2009.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

The fiscal effect is expected to be negligible and difficult to accurately estimate.