

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DOA 2/15/2012

LRB Number	11-3873/1	Introduction Number	AB-0548	Estimate Type	Original
Description The typeface used, and rates charged, for publication of legal notices					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

STATE FISCAL EFFECT

Assembly Bill (AB) 548 makes changes to the statutory provisions on publication of legal notices. The bill standardizes the type and size of font that can be used in legal notices and eliminates the current minimum rate per line and requires the standard line rate to be reviewed annually. The bill also requires that any newspaper that publishes a legal notice must also place an electronic copy of the notice on a web site that is maintained by Wisconsin newspapers for this purpose. The newspapers cannot charge customers for placement of the electronic copy on the web site.

Under current law the Department of Administration (DOA) sets the rates that newspapers may charge state, county and local governments when the entity is required to publish legal notice of an action. Currently, DOA procurement staff has developed rates for 551 fonts and font sizes. Changes to those rates are made periodically upon request from the publisher. DOA also reviews and adjusts the minimum and maximum rates every two years, by gathering and analyzing the required data and consulting with representatives of the newspaper industry.

The bill's impact on DOA will decrease the workload insofar as developing or adjusting the rate for a specific non-standard font. There will only be one font, Arial and 7 font sizes. The bill also eliminates a minimum rate. Workload for adjusting the standard rate will increase since it will be done annually. The Department believes there will be increased costs arising from having to do the standard rate setting every year, but those costs will be offset in part by a reduction in the workload associated with maintaining rates for a large number of fonts and font sizes. Any increase can be absorbed by the Department.

The impact on DOA costs arising from the publication of legal notices is indeterminate.

LOCAL Estimate

The impact on costs arising from the publication of legal notices by counties and municipalities and other government entities is indeterminate.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Indeterminate.