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2017

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #141

Position Reductions (Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection)

[LFB 2017-19 Budget Summary: Page 65, #9]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is a multidisciplinary agency dedicated to promoting, regulating, and supporting Wisconsin's agriculture sector. Additionally, it provides oversight of food production, preservation of agricultural resources, and enforcement of consumer protection laws. The Department has an operating budget of approximately \$98 million in 2016-17 from a variety of sources, including federal funds, license fees and other program revenue (PR), several segregated (SEG) funds, and general purpose revenues (GPR). For 2016-17, the Department has 648 authorized positions.

GOVERNOR

Delete \$525,100 annually (\$302,800 GPR, \$63,100 PR and \$159,200 SEG) and 6.10 positions (3.1 GPR, 1.0 PR and 2.0 SEG).

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The following table identifies positions and funding to be deleted under the Governor's proposal. These positions include: (a) 0.5 economic development consultant, which provides technical assistance and coordination with producers and industry groups to increase market share of local products, as well as implementing the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program; (b) 1.0 agricultural program specialist, which works with producers and processors to provide business-related technical assistance to promote organic and specialty crops and the Something Special from Wisconsin program; (c) 1.0 hydrogeologist, which provides administration for the Department's agricultural chemical cleanup program (ACCP); (d) 0.5 hydrogeologist, which provides administration for the Department's soil and water resource management program; (e) 0.5 office associate, which provides administrative support for the Division of Agricultural Resource

Management's Environmental Quality Section; (f) 1.0 policy initiatives advisor, which works on agency lean initiatives and special projects for the Secretary; (g) 0.6 training coordinator, which provides technical and soft skills training to DATCP staff; and (h) 1.0 program and policy analyst, which leads and performs analyses related to program operations and policy, and organization and management issues including rulemaking projects, drafting proposed language, conducting public hearings, responding to requests from the administration and Legislature, and analyzing agency performance. The Department indicates 5.6 positions are vacant, with only the 0.5 office associate being filled.

<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>Annual Reduction</u>	<u>Fund Source</u>
Agricultural Development (general program operations)	-1.50	-\$75,500	GPR
Agrichemical Management (general program operations)	-2.00	-59,200	SEG
Office of Sec. and Mgmt. Div. (general program operations)	-1.60	-227,300	GPR
Telephone Solicitation Regulation	<u>-1.00</u>	<u>-63,100</u>	PR
Total	-6.10	-\$525,100	

2. In its errata letter, the administration requests: (a) the restoration of \$105,400 GPR annually and 0.6 position; (b) the restoration of \$20,600 SEG annually; and (c) the deletion of \$3,300 PR annually. It indicates these changes are due to incorrect calculation of position funding, and unintentional double-counting of the 0.6 training coordinator, which is also included in the human resources shared services proposal. In the event the training coordinator is not restored, it is expected DATCP would be required to eliminate a different position to accommodate the reduction, which may result in an employee layoff. In the event funding associated with salary and fringe benefits were not restored for 2017-19, any remaining authorized positions would be provided full funding of salary and fringe benefits under standard budget adjustments for the 2019-21 biennial budget.

3. Positions recommended for deletion were first proposed by DATCP in its 2017-19 budget request as potential agency reductions under 2015 Act 201. DATCP reports duties of the 0.5 economic development consultant, 1.0 agricultural program specialist, 0.5 hydrogeologist, 0.5 office associate, and 1.0 policy initiatives coordinator have all been consolidated or reassigned with other staff. Further, it indicates 1.0 hydrogeologist is no longer necessary, given that the ACCP manages fewer cases each year. Finally, the Department indicates that if the 1.0 program and policy analyst position were eliminated, it would work to prioritize policy initiatives and rulemaking projects based on available resources.

4. It should be noted that the Department intends for certain activities of 2.8 non-veterinary positions deleted from the stray voltage program under previous Committee action and 1.0 farm-to-school program coordinator (discussed in a separate paper) to be absorbed by program staff in the Division of Agricultural Development. However, agricultural development staff have already absorbed vacancies from the 0.5 economic development consultant and 1.0 agricultural program specialist. Although the Department indicates it believes it has sufficient staff to support its agricultural development program activities, it is unclear to what extent the Department would be

able to provide technical assistance to farmers, processors and distributors on buy-local, organic and specialty crop, farm-to-school, and stray voltage initiatives if the positions were eliminated. In total, the Governor's bill would reduce Division staffing from 28.95 positions currently to 21.45 in the 2017-19 biennium.

5. Given the majority of positions are vacant with responsibilities assigned to other staff, and were included by the agency in its 2017-19 Act 201 submission, the Committee could consider adopting the Governor's proposal as introduced [Alternative 1]. The Committee could consider approving the Governor's proposal, including errata [Alternative 2]. The Committee could also consider modifying the original proposal for technical or programmatic reasons, as described earlier, by restoring: (a) the 0.6 GPR position with \$45,000 annually, as it is identified for deletion or transfer in two bill provisions [Alternative 3a]; or (b) 1.5 GPR agricultural development positions with \$75,500 GPR annually, to maintain staffing to fulfill continuing responsibilities of the Division of Agricultural Development and to offset other reductions under the bill [Alternative 3b].

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt the Governor's recommendation as introduced.

ALT 1	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	- \$605,600	- 3.10	\$0	0.00
PR	- 126,200	- 1.00	0	0.00
SEG	<u>- 318,400</u>	<u>- 2.00</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total	- \$1,050,200	- 6.10	\$0	0.00

2. Adopt the Governor's recommended position reductions, as modified by the errata letter. This would delete 5.5 positions and annual base funding of \$197,400 GPR, \$66,400 PR and \$138,600 SEG.

ALT 2	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	- \$394,800	- 2.50	\$210,800	0.60
PR	- 132,800	- 1.00	- 6,600	0.00
SEG	<u>- 277,200</u>	<u>- 2.00</u>	<u>41,200</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total	- \$804,800	- 5.50	\$245,400	0.60

3. In addition to Alternative 1, modify the provision by one or both of the following:

- a. Restore 0.6 GPR position and \$45,000 GPR annually to reconcile a portion of a provision affected by multiple bill provisions. (This would adopt the errata item for a position erroneously included in two bill provisions.)

ALT 3a	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$0	0.00	\$90,000	0.60

b. Restore 1.0 GPR agricultural program specialist and 0.5 GPR economic development consultant, with associated funding of \$75,500 GPR annually.

ALT 3b	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$0	0.00	\$151,000	1.50

4. Delete the Governor's proposal to reduce positions at the Department and restore 6.1 positions and annual funding of \$302,800 GPR, \$63,100 PR and \$159,200 SEG.

ALT 4	Change to Base		Change to Bill	
	Funding	Positions	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$0	0.00	\$605,600	3.10
PR	0	0.00	126,200	1.00
SEG	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>318,400</u>	<u>2.00</u>
Total	\$0	0.00	\$1,050,200	6.10

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