



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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June, 2021

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #402

Alternate Emergency Response Expansion and 9-1-1 Diversion (Justice)

[LFB 2021-23 Budget Summary: Page 372, #14]

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Assembly Bill 68/Senate Bill 111 would provide \$280,000 GPR annually in a newly-created annual appropriation for a grant to counties with a population of 750,000 or more (Milwaukee) to support: (a) expanding the capacity of behavioral crisis lines that provide an alternative to 9-1-1 for nonemergency behavioral health issues; and (b) the research, design and personnel costs of creating programs to divert behavioral health situations from 9-1-1 centers. The county would be required to submit an application to the Department of Justice (DOJ) that includes a proposed plan for expenditure of the grant moneys. Under the bill, DOJ would be required to review an application and plan to determine whether these materials meet the DOJ established criteria. Further, DOJ would be required to review the use of grant money in order to ensure that the grant is used in accordance with the approved plan. The bill specifies that the criteria and procedures developed by DOJ need not be promulgated as administrative rules. Currently, only Milwaukee County would qualify for this grant program.

2. The Milwaukee County executive indicated "Last year, the County Board allocated \$1.6 million in CARES funding to mental health services, including services for uninsured populations impacted by COVID-19. In addition, the Crisis Assessment and Response Team (CART), a program which pairs mental health clinicians with law enforcement officers in response to emergency calls where mental health symptoms may be present, received a \$500,000 expansion to provide coverage to all of Milwaukee County 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

3. Grant funding proposed in AB 68/SB 111 is intended to support efforts to develop alternative means to address behavioral health needs without involvement of 9-1-1 call centers. The bill specifies that grant funding may be used for contracts between local health departments and nonprofit organizations to increase the capacity of behavioral crisis support services for

nonemergency behavioral health issues. In order to support Milwaukee County's mental health care efforts beyond the steps the County is already taking, the Committee may choose to fund the grant program. [Alternative 1]

4. While federal funding could be one-time in nature, if federal funding is initially provided continued funding of a mental health initiatives could be addressed in subsequent biennial budgets. Given that Milwaukee County may be able to utilize federal funding for their mental health incentives around crisis response, the Committee may decide to take no action. [Alternative 2]

ALTERNATIVES

1. Provide \$280,000 GPR annually in a newly created annual appropriation for a nonemergency behavioral health issue 9-1-1 alternative grant to counties with a population of 750,000 or more.

ALT 1	Change to Base
GPR	\$560,000

2. Take no action.

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