

Fiscal Estimate - 2023 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 23-3254/1	Introduction Number AB-0413
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Description
 prohibiting institutions of higher education from conducting gain of function research on potentially pandemic pathogens, requiring reporting of the intention to conduct research on potentially pandemic pathogens, and providing a penalty

Fiscal Effect

State:

No State Fiscal Effect
 Indeterminate
 Increase Existing Appropriations
 Increase Existing Revenues
 Increase Costs - May be possible to absorb within agency's budget
 Decrease Existing Appropriations
 Decrease Existing Revenues

 Yes
 No
 Create New Appropriations
 Decrease Costs

Local:

No Local Government Costs
 Indeterminate

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Costs <input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Costs <input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	3. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Permissive <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory	5. Types of Local Government Units Affected <input type="checkbox"/> Towns <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Cities <input type="checkbox"/> Counties <input type="checkbox"/> Others <input type="checkbox"/> School Districts <input type="checkbox"/> WTCS Districts
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Fund Sources Affected	Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GPR <input type="checkbox"/> FED <input type="checkbox"/> PRO <input type="checkbox"/> PRS <input type="checkbox"/> SEG <input type="checkbox"/> SEGS (1)(cf)	

Agency/Prepared By	Authorized Signature	Date
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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DHS 10/10/2023

LRB Number	23-3254/1	Introduction Number	AB-0413	Estimate Type	Original
Description prohibiting institutions of higher education from conducting gain of function research on potentially pandemic pathogens, requiring reporting of the intention to conduct research on potentially pandemic pathogens, and providing a penalty					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This proposal prohibits institutions of higher education (defined as an institution or college campus within the University of Wisconsin System) from conducting research on "gain of function" on potentially pandemic pathogens. "Gain of Function" research is defined in the bill as research that may be reasonably anticipated to enhance the transmissibility or virulence of a potentially pandemic pathogen. Institutions in violation of this prohibition will not receive state funding for the following fiscal year. In addition to the prohibition of research in institutions of higher education and associated penalties, this proposal requires the Department to review all research proposals pertaining to potentially pandemic pathogens. Per the proposal, the Department must review proposals from "any person that intends to conduct research on a potentially pandemic pathogen, regardless of whether the person will use state funds for the research".

Currently, the Department does not have staff who conduct these activities and would need a new unit to review the proposals. Based on the broad definition of pandemic pathogen, it is difficult to estimate the number of proposals that will be submitted annually, but it is assumed that there will be a high volume of proposals to review. In addition to review of the written proposal, it is assumed that the Department would also inspect physical research facilities to ensure compliance with security and environmental standards.

Costs to implement this bill consist of personnel costs for a team of 6 full time experts along with funding for travel and training. Required staff are as follows:

Unit Supervisor: 1.0 FTE Research Administrator would serve as the unit supervisor for the newly created unit. Duties would include usual supervisory duties of a unit, along with subject matter expertise required to supervise administrative and scientific functions.

Program Coordinator: 1.0 FTE Human Services Program Coordinator would coordinate all administrative processes related to investigations and review (such as intake of submissions, appropriate follow up, communications with applicants, scheduling, coordinating receipt of documents, any other admin associated with the program).

Physical Security Specialist: 1.0 Research Scientist would be responsible for evaluating other security processes, such as background checks and policies related to whom access is given. Buildings where gain of function research take place often have multiple layers of security (such as sophisticated airflow systems) with numerous redundancies and failsafe measures.

Plumbing, air and electrical expert: 1.0 Research Scientist would be responsible for evaluating plumbing, circulation, and electrical infrastructure to ensure live pathogens are unable to leave the facility.

Infection Prevention, Epidemiology and Research Evaluation: 2.0 GPR FTE Research Scientist would be responsible for evaluating the nature of the research and safety protocols that have been implemented in support of proposed research.

It is assumed that the Department would contract for these roles, rather than hiring state positions, because of the very specialized, technical expertise needed. In addition, the particular expertise needed may vary depending on the proposal being reviewed. The minimum estimated cost for total new DHS FTE is \$1,705,000 annually. This estimate is based on maximum salaries for equivalent state position classifications, with 50% added for contractor overhead costs. In addition, the Department estimates annual cost for travel and training to be \$20,000 GPR for a total of \$1,725,000 GPR annually.

Due to the broad definition of qualifying pathogens and the requirement that reviews are to be conducted on proposals by any purpose, regardless of fund source, the potential number of required Department reviews

may increase over time.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications