

Fiscal Services Division

Legislative Services Agency

Fiscal Note

HF 712 - Wild & Dangerous Animal Regulation (LSB 1622 HV)
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Fiscal Note Version - New

Description

House File 712 creates a new section in the Code of Iowa, for the regulation of wild animals to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in coordination with local governments. The Bill creates new crimes, and imposes an aggravated misdemeanor offense for those crimes.

Background

This Bill specifies when a person can or cannot own a wild animal and specifies that the owner must register the animal with the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, pay a registration fee, and have a microchip implanted. The fee amount varies, depending on the type of animal being registered. Any person that owns a wild animal and is in violation is subject to a civil penalty of at least \$200 and up to \$2,000 with each day of occurrence being considered as a separate offense. A person that intentionally causes a wild animal to escape is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor. The average State costs for one aggravated misdemeanor conviction ranges from \$2,600 (court costs and probation) to \$6,300 (court costs, jury trial, indigent defense, prison and parole). The maximum costs will be incurred across multiple years while the offender is supervised in the correctional system, either in prison or in the community.

Assumptions

- Two additional positions would be required. Salary costs are estimated at \$101,000 for FY 2008, with an annual increase of 4.5%. This would include a veterinarian and a livestock inspector.
- First year equipment costs are estimated at \$37,000 with a purchase of two vehicles at \$32,000 and two computers at \$5,000.
- Estimated annual expenditures for travel and miscellaneous expenses are \$17,000 per year.
- There is an annual registration fee paid by the owner of the wild animal and the first year varies from \$50 to \$500. The renewal registration fee is one-half of the registration fee.
- The number of wild animals in possession is unknown.

Correctional Impact

The creation of new offenses carries the potential for a correctional impact on court caseloads, prisons, county jails, Community-Based Corrections (CBC) and indigent defense resources. However, due to a lack of data, that correctional impact cannot be estimated.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of HF 712 is an increase of expenditures of \$155,000 and 2.00 FTE positions in FY 2009 and \$123,000 for FY 2009. For each year after that, there would be an increase in salary expense and potentially some travel expense. It should be noted that since the number of wild animals in possession is currently unknown, it may be possible that additional staff may be required once the Program had been implemented and the number of wild animals in possession becomes known. The fiscal impact of the creation of new crimes cannot be estimated due to insufficient information.

Sources

Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Department of Human Rights, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning Division

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

March 12, 2007

The fiscal note and correctional impact statement for this bill was prepared pursuant to Joint Rule 17 and pursuant to Section 2.56, Code of Iowa. Data used in developing this fiscal note and correctional impact statement are available from the Fiscal Services Division, Legislative Services Agency to members of the Legislature upon request.
