

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
12/20/2014

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 1042

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2013-2015 Biennium		2015-2017 Biennium		2017-2019 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues						
Expenditures			\$54,375			
Appropriations						

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2013-2015 Biennium	2015-2017 Biennium	2017-2019 Biennium
Counties			
Cities			
School Districts			
Townships			

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This Bill provides appropriation authority to the Department of Health for the electronic review of death records and for the reimbursement of travel costs for training and planned meetings.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

Section 1 provides an appropriation to defray technology costs related to the electronic review of death records.

Section 2 provides an appropriation to reimburse the travel costs of county personnel attending county coroner trainings and meetings to plan for future coroner services in the state.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

The cost to modify the Electronic Vital Event Registration System (EVERS) for electronic review of death records is estimated at approximately \$15,000. The travel costs associated with attending county coroner trainings and meetings are estimated to be \$39,375. These costs would be included in the operating line item.

- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation or a part of the appropriation is included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

No appropriation is necessary as the Bill contains an appropriation for these expenditures.

Name: Brenda M. Weisz

Agency: Department of Health

Telephone: 328-4542

Date Prepared: 01/02/2015

2015 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1042

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

1042
1/13/2015
21934

☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Reed Arnesen

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A bill for an Act to provide appropriations to the state department of health for information technology costs related to the electronic review of death records and for the reimbursement of travel costs related to county coroner training and planning meetings.

Minutes:

Testimony # 1, Testimony # 2

Chairman Weisz called the hearing to order on HB 1042.

Sheila Sandness: From Legislative Council gave information on the bill. (See Testimony #1)

Chairman Weisz: Is there anything in the Governor's budget for this?

Sheila Sandness: the Department of Health can answer that. I believe there is some funding in there for this appropriation bill.

Terry Traynor: Association of Counties Assistant Director testified in support of the bill. (See Testimony #2)

No Opposition

Kirby Krueger Section Chief for the Medical Services Section: Gave information only. He testified that the money for Section 1 will go towards modifying the death certificate system and allow for electronic viewing. Section 2 is not in the Governor's budget.

Chairman Weisz closed the hearing.

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1042
1/19/2015
22165

☐ Subcommittee
☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A bill for an Act to provide appropriations to the state department of health for information technology costs related to the electronic review of death records and for the reimbursement of travel costs related to county coroner training and planning meetings.

Minutes:

Chairman Weisz: Calls committee to order

Rep. Porter: I don't see where it is our responsibility to pay for training for county coroners, and I'm not sure that it is a function of the state of North Dakota.

Chairman Weisz: Was there a motion? I don't understand section 1 concerning the \$15,000 for IT costs. It should have definitely been built into their budget.

Rep. Porter: Made a motion of Do Not Pass.

Rep. Rich Becker: Seconds the motion.

Rep. Rich Becker: The fiscal note at the bottom has two sums that roughly add up to \$54,000 which is listed in the biennium for the general fund. Could the \$15,000 mentioned be covered in the fiscal record?

Chairman Weisz: Is unsure why there is a fiscal note. This bill is a direct appropriation and there shouldn't be any fiscal notes when there are direct appropriations.

Rep. Hofstad: I agree with the no vote and support a do not pass.

Rep. Mooney: I'm always a good proponent of counties. This bill didn't have a lot of substance to it. There is probably going to be a move in the next session to have the coroners pushed out of the local level entirely.

Chairman Weisz: Most of these costs reside in just a handful of counties.

Rep. Seibel: ND has had electronic death record for 8 years now. I believe it has worked extremely well.

A roll call vote was taken: Yes 12, No 0, Absent 1 (Rep. Muscha)

Do Not Pass Carries

Rep. Keifert will carry the bill.

Date: 1-19-15
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1042

House Human Services Committee

☐ Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: _____

Recommendation: ☐ Adopt Amendment
☐ Do Pass ☒ Do Not Pass ☐ Without Committee Recommendation
☐ As Amended ☐ Rerefer to Appropriations
☐ Place on Consent Calendar
Other Actions: ☐ Reconsider ☐ _____

Motion Made By Rep. PORTER Seconded By Rep. Rich Becker

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Weisz	✓		Rep. Mooney	✓	
Vice-Chair Hofstad	✓		Rep. Muscha	✓	
Rep. Bert Anderson	✓		Rep. Oversen	✓	
Rep. Dick Anderson	✓				
Rep. Rich S. Becker	✓				
Rep. Damschen	✓				
Rep. Fehr	✓				
Rep. Kiefert	✓				
Rep. Porter	✓				
Rep. Seibel	✓				

Total (Yes) 12 No 0

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Kiefert

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1042: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1042 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2015 TESTIMONY

HB 1042

#1

1/13/2015

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

HB 1042

For the record, my name is Sheila Sandness and I am a Senior Fiscal Analyst for the Legislative Council. I am here to present information on House Bill No. 1042 relating to appropriations to the State Department of Health for information technology costs related to the electronic review of death records and for the reimbursement of travel costs related to county coroner training and planning meetings. I appear neither for nor against the bill, but just to provide information and answer any questions you may have.

Section 9 of Senate Bill No. 2004, approved by the Legislative Assembly in 2013, directed a study of the funding provided by the state for autopsies and state and county responsibilities for the cost of autopsies, including the feasibility and desirability of counties sharing in the cost of autopsies performed by the State Department of Health and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. This study was assigned to the interim Health Services Committee.

The interim Health Services Committee received information regarding the current system of death investigation in the state, county autopsy costs, and medicolegal death investigation system funding models. In addition, the committee received a summary of county costs incurred for social services programs.

The interim Health Services Committee recommends House Bill No. 1042 to provide appropriations to the State Department of Health for information technology costs related to the electronic review of death records and for the reimbursement of travel costs related to county coroner training and the planning of future coroner services in the state. In addition the interim Health Services Committee recommends House Concurrent Resolution No. 3004 directing the Legislative Management to continue to study medicolegal death investigation in the state.

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The Health Services Committee's findings and recommendation regarding the autopsy funding study can be found in the "Report of the North Dakota Legislative Management".

That concludes my testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

#2
1/13/2015

**TESTIMONY TO THE
HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Prepared January 13, 2015 by

Terry Traynor, NDACo Assistant Director
North Dakota Association of Counties

RE HB1042 COUNTY CORONER TRAINING

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee – the North Dakota Association of Counties is in full support of House Bill No. 1042

To ensure that it is contained in the committee record, I would like to begin by summarizing the changes in the state/county relationship regarding coroner/medical examiner services (and costs) that resulted from the creation of the office of the State Forensic Examiner in 1995, and modified somewhat again in 2009 with the repeal of Chapter 11-19 and the overhaul of Chapter 11-19.1.

Prior to the creation of the forensic examiner's office, the counties were largely responsible for death investigations from start to finish. The increasing costs of contract autopsies in the 1990's began to stress county budgets. The Legislature wanted to improve the system while taking away the perceived disincentive for requesting necessary autopsies, by shifting that part of the cost to the State. The state forensic examiner was also given greater authority over the qualifications of those appointed as county coroners.

It was felt however that there needed to be a balance, and the cost of the local coroners, and the cost of transporting bodies for autopsy, when necessary, should remain with the county. The cost of county coroner training however was never directly addressed.

To better describe the county coroner system during the interim, the counties were surveyed about their staffing arrangement and their costs. The results of the survey have been compiled into the attached tables.

Medical Doctor	23
Registered Nurse	3
UND Med.School	1
Funeral Director	11
Assigned-Sheriff	13
Assigned-EM/911	1
Police Chief	1
Total 53	

The fact that counties spent \$622,000 in CY2013 and were anticipating at that time to spend \$723,000 last year, demonstrates that counties have continued to do their part to support the local costs of the coroners/medical examiner system.

We have contrasted the county information with census estimates and county data from the most recent State Forensic Examiner's Report posted on the web – giving a very high level picture of the system.

Coroner	Population	Referrals		Consultations	
		Number	% of Pop.	Number	% of Pop.
Funeral Director (11)	52,649	48	0.09%	16	0.03%
Law Enforcement (15)	75,571	57	0.08%	54	0.07%
Medical (26) *	595,173	276	0.05%	125	0.02%

* Analysis excludes Grand Forks County

While small numbers make any analysis a bit suspect, based on population, the coroners with medical training (on average) appear to refer to, and consult with, the State Forensic Examiner less than non-medically trained coroners.

I believe that this argues quite strongly for the need for better training of our local coroners. The travel stipends funded in HB1041 will support improved results and decision-making at the local level – ultimately increasing the efficiency of the entire system.

Likewise, it is my understanding that the small appropriation for improvement to the death records software will enhance the system as well.

Please give HB1042 a Do Pass recommendation.

County Expenditures and State Autopsies

Table 1

	2013 Estimated Population	County Coroner	Contract Coroner also in:	State Forensic Examiner's CY2012 Report by County	
				Referrals ¹	Consultations ²
a.	b.	c.	d.	f.	g.
Adams	2,360	Medical Doctor		1	1
Barnes	11,190	Medical Doctor		8	6
Benson	6,877	Medical Doctor	Ramsey	3	1
Billings	874	Medical Doctor	Stark	2	
Bottineau	6,736	Funeral Director		2	2
Bowman	3,214	Funeral Director		2	2
Burke	2,306	Assigned-Sheriff		1	8
Burleigh	88,457	Medical Doctor	Morton	55	9
Cass	162,829	Medical Doctor ³		58	19
Cavalier	3,896	Medical Doctor		1	3
Dickey	5,248	Funeral Director		4	
Divide	2,314	Assigned-Sheriff		2	
Dunn	4,162	Registered Nurse		3	3
Eddy	2,404	Funeral Director		4	2
Emmons	3,486	Funeral Director		2	1
Foster	3,366	Medical Doctor		1	
Golden Valley	1,823	Funeral Director		3	
Grand Forks	69,179	Medical Doctor			
Grant	2,377	Medical Doctor		2	1
Griggs	2,296	Funeral Director			
Hettinger	2,660	Assigned-Sheriff		2	
Kidder	2,428	Police Chief		1	
LaMoure	4,166	Assigned-Sheriff		2	
Logan	1,946	Assigned-Sheriff			
McHenry	5,922	Medical Doctor	Wells	1	
McIntosh	2,754	Assigned-Sheriff		1	
McKenzie	9,314	Funeral Director		18	3
McLean	9,517	Funeral Director		9	5
Mercer	8,592	Medical Doctor	Oliver	4	1
Morton	28,990	Medical Doctor	Burleigh	11	2
Mountrail	9,376	Assigned-Sheriff		19	13
Nelson	3,095	Funeral Director		1	
Oliver	1,874	Medical Doctor	Mercer	1	1
Pembina	7,181	Medical Doctor		3	1
Pierce	4,451	Medical Doctor		2	7
Ramsey	11,554	Medical Doctor	Benson	13	2
Ransom	5,516	Funeral Director		3	1
Renville	2,608	Medical Doctor		1	
Richland	16,339	Assigned-Sheriff		4	4
Rolette	14,582	Assigned-Sheriff		12	15
Sargent	3,890	Registered Nurse		1	
Sheridan	1,304	Assigned-Sheriff		1	
Sioux	4,430	Assigned-Sheriff		8	
Slope	761	Assigned-Sheriff		2	
Stark	28,212	Medical Doctor	Billings	10	9
Steele	1,960	Assigned-EM/911		1	1
Stutsman	21,120	Medical Doctor		13	11
Towner	2,317	Registered Nurse		1	
Traill	8,245	Assigned-Sheriff		1	13
Walsh	11,104	Medical Doctor		2	2
Ward	67,990	UND Med.School		40	27
Wells	4,206	Medical Doctor	McHenry	1	1
Williams	29,595	Medical Doctor		38	18
				381	195

Notes: 1. Referrals consist of cases referred to the forensic examiner by county coroners for an examination or autopsy.

2. Consultations consist of discussing the circumstances surrounding a death with the county coroners and advising them about handling the case locally.

3. Cass County contracts with Fargo/Cass Public Health for the coroner, but also employs two coroner assistants

County Expenditures & Budgets for Coroner Services - Detail

Table 2

	CY2013 County Expenditures					CY2014 County Budgets				
	Coroner Salary Fringe/Operating/ Travel/Rent/etc.	Body Transport Fees for Autopsy	Autopsy Fees if not performed by the State ME	Supplies Other costs if any	Total Coroner/ME Spending	Coroner Salary Fringe/Operating/ Travel/Rent/etc.	Body Transport Fees for Autopsy	Autopsy Fees if not performed by the State ME	Supplies Other costs if any	Total Coroner/ME Spending
a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.	h.	i.	j.	k.
Adams	\$ 743				\$ 743	\$ 2,500				\$ 2,500
Barnes	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000	\$ 2,700				\$ 2,700
Benson	\$ 200				\$ 200	\$ 200				\$ 200
Billings	\$ 500				\$ 500	\$ 500				\$ 500
Bottineau	\$ 2,500				\$ 2,500	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000
Bowman	\$ 3,000				\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000				\$ 3,000
Burke	\$ 720			\$ 507	\$ 1,227	\$ 720			\$ 750	\$ 1,470
Burleigh	\$ 54,750	\$ 13,801		\$ 1,085	\$ 69,636	\$ 54,750	\$ 15,000		\$ 3,500	\$ 73,250
Cass	\$ 111,700	\$ 15,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 128,700	\$ 169,856	\$ 20,000			\$ 189,856
Cavalier	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000
Dickey	\$ 800	\$ 4,100			\$ 4,900	\$ 800	\$ 4,100			\$ 4,900
Divide	\$ 1,090				\$ 1,090	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000
Dunn	\$ 3,086				\$ 3,086	\$ 3,600			\$ 2,500	\$ 6,100
Eddy	\$ 1,500				\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500				\$ 1,500
Emmons	\$ 1,500				\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500				\$ 1,500
Foster	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000
Golden Valley	\$ 6,100	\$ 1,000			\$ 7,100	\$ 5,713	\$ 1,650			\$ 7,363
Grand Forks	\$ 117,636	\$ 8,400	\$ 10,609		\$ 136,645	\$ 132,000	\$ 8,400	\$ 11,000		\$ 151,400
Grant					\$ -	\$ 75				\$ 75
Griggs	\$ 2,000			\$ 1,200	\$ 3,200	\$ 1,043				\$ 1,043
Hettinger	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000
Kidder	\$ 500				\$ 500	\$ 300				\$ 300
LaMoure	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000
Logan	\$ 250				\$ 250	\$ 250				\$ 250
McHenry	\$ 1,900	\$ 1,495		\$ 200	\$ 3,595	\$ 1,900	\$ 1,495		\$ 200	\$ 3,595
McIntosh	\$ 240	\$ 260			\$ 500	\$ 240	\$ 260			\$ 500
McKenzie	\$ 32,259			\$ 564	\$ 32,823	\$ 40,000			\$ 700	\$ 40,700
McLean		\$ 2,000		\$ 600	\$ 2,600		\$ 2,000		\$ 600	\$ 2,600
Mercer	\$ 2,500				\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500				\$ 2,500
Morton	\$ 27,400	\$ 7,100			\$ 34,500	\$ 27,400	\$ 5,200			\$ 32,600
Mountrail	\$ 4,848	\$ 5,391			\$ 10,239	\$ 4,848	\$ 5,152			\$ 10,000
Nelson					\$ -		\$ 500			\$ 500
Oliver	\$ 2,200				\$ 2,200	\$ 2,200				\$ 2,200
Pembina	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000
Pierce	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000
Ramsey		\$ 535			\$ 535		\$ 2,300			\$ 2,300
Ransom	\$ 300				\$ 300	\$ 200	\$ 240			\$ 440
Renville	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000				\$ 2,000
Richland				\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500				\$ 5,300	\$ 5,300
Rolette	\$ 1,200	\$ 3,800			\$ 5,000	\$ 1,200	\$ 3,800			\$ 5,000
Sargent	\$ 1,400	\$ 660			\$ 2,060	\$ 1,400	\$ 660			\$ 2,060
Sheridan	\$ 930				\$ 930	\$ 450				\$ 450
Sioux	\$ 500				\$ 500	\$ 500				\$ 500
Slope	\$ 500				\$ 500	\$ 500				\$ 500
Stark	\$ 10,000				\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000				\$ 10,000
Steele	\$ 2,520				\$ 2,520	\$ 2,640				\$ 2,640
Stutsman	\$ 20,000				\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000				\$ 20,000
Towner	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000				\$ 1,000
Traill	\$ 7,300				\$ 7,300	\$ 7,301				\$ 7,301
Walsh	\$ 800	\$ 1,440			\$ 2,240	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500			\$ 2,500
Ward	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000			\$ 65,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000			\$ 65,000
Wells	\$ 3,496	\$ 1,000		\$ 2,000	\$ 6,496	\$ 3,496	\$ 1,000		\$ 2,000	\$ 6,496
Williams	\$ 13,158	\$ 12,126			\$ 25,284	\$ 17,550	\$ 16,620			\$ 34,170
Total	\$ 485,026	\$ 113,108	\$ 12,609	\$ 11,656	\$ 622,399	\$ 571,332	\$ 124,877	\$ 11,000	\$ 15,550	\$ 722,759
% of Total	77.9%	18.2%	2.0%	1.9%		79.0%	17.3%	1.5%	2.2%	

Notes: 1. Missing financial data estimated with amounts from neighboring counties of similar size and similar coroner arrangement - estimated data is italicized.