

**Public Service Commission
Budget No. 408
House Bill No. 1008**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2017-19 legislative appropriation	45.00	\$6,630,762	\$12,421,016	\$19,051,778
2015-17 legislative appropriation	<u>46.00</u>	<u>7,415,451</u>	<u>14,300,575</u>	<u>21,716,026</u>
2017-19 appropriation increase (decrease) to 2015-17 appropriation	(1.00)	(\$784,689)	(\$1,879,559)	(\$2,664,248)

Item Description

FTE positions - The 2017 Legislative Assembly authorized 45 FTE positions, a decrease of 1 FTE position from the 2015-17 biennium authorized level of 46 FTE positions. The Legislative Assembly removed 2 undesignated FTE positions and added funding to convert a temporary railroad inspector to an FTE position.

Rail rate complaint case - The 2017 Legislative Assembly provided for a transfer of \$900,000 from the Bank of North Dakota beginning farmer revolving loan fund to the Public Service Commission to pay for costs associated with a rail rate complaint case. If any amount is spent, the commission is to reimburse the beginning farmer revolving loan fund using the amount from damages or proceeds, net of legal fees, received from a successful outcome of a rail rate complaint case.

Specialized legal services - The 2017 Legislative Assembly appropriated \$530,000 for specialized legal services, of which \$436,000 is one-time funding from federal funds (\$336,000) and the strategic investment and improvements fund (\$100,000).

Status/Result

The Public Service Commission removed an accounting/budget specialist position and a public utility analyst position. Both of the positions were vacant prior to removal. The railroad safety inspector temporary position was filled in August 2015 and officially became an FTE position on July 1, 2017.

A rail rate complaint case has not been filed. The Public Service Commission believes readily accessible funding to pursue regulatory relief against the railroad industry has limited abusive rail industry practices.

As of April 23, 2018, the Public Service Commission has spent \$10,035 for specialized legal services.