

**Public Service Commission
Budget 408
Senate Bill No. 2008**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2011-13 legislative appropriation	43.00	\$6,020,215	\$13,061,648	\$19,081,863
2009-11 legislative appropriation	<u>43.00</u>	<u>5,676,165</u>	<u>10,662,242</u>	<u>16,338,407</u>
2011-13 appropriation increase (decrease) to 2009-11 appropriation	0.00	\$344,050	\$2,399,406	\$2,743,456

Item Description

Federal fiscal stimulus funding - The Legislative Assembly provided \$658,217 of one-time federal funding relating to continuation of federal fiscal stimulus funding for the regulation and oversight of energy transmission and generation infrastructure. The Public Service Commission was authorized to utilize this funding for 3 temporary FTE positions, training costs, and other related operating expenses.

Rail rate complaint case - The Legislative Assembly in 2011 provided 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 amounts from damages or proceeds, net of legal fees, received from a successful outcome of a rail rate complaint case.

Status/Result

During the 2009-11 biennium, the Public Service Commission was awarded a United States Department of Energy stimulus grant award of \$766,350. After conclusion of the 2011 regular legislative session, the commission determined fewer resources were needed and requested a grant reduction of \$342,210 leaving a revised grant award of \$424,210. The commission anticipates using the grant funds for 1 temporary FTE position, training costs, and other operating expenses. The grant funding expires in December 2012.

A rail rate complaint case has not been filed primarily because state activity associated with the rail rate case and readily accessible funds to pursue regulatory relief against the railroad industry has guarded against abusive rail industry practices. The effect of a weakened national economy on spending is also putting pressure on the railroad industry to keep rail rates affordable.