



Legislative Priority: Determining Fiscal Impact on Counties for Transparency for Taxpayers

The Association of Minnesota Counties supports legislation that would require bills to include county investment as a line item of funding to encourage transparency in taxation, and consideration of the property tax impact cost shifts.

BACKGROUND: In recent legislative sessions, there have been increased requirements for county investment in areas of child protection and mental health.

- Counties are charged with hiring more employees to specifically address child protection issues as well as provide 24/7 child protection coverage. Many of these costs are associated with implementing the laws relating to the recommendations of the bipartisan Legislative Task Force on Child Protection.
- For mental health services, a change was made during the 2015 Legislative Session where counties became responsible for more costs relating to mental health care at state-operated facilities (such as Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center and community behavioral health hospitals).

CURRENT SITUATION: The mandated costs shifts from the state to the counties have become crippling for county budgets across the state. The changes have required counties to hire more employees, add more working hours, and take on more costs relating to healthcare services. In some cases, counties have to pay three to four times the cost than they did prior to the 2015 law change relating to mental health services.

2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY: This bill would require that the cost of a legislative proposal take into account county investment to accurately reflect taxpayer investment. Taxpayers deserve to know the costs to counties imposed by the state.