



STATE OF VERMONT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee

Cc: Senate President *Pro Tempore* John Campbell; House Speaker Shapleigh Smith; House Committee on Government Operations; Chief Legislative Fiscal Officer Stephen Klein

From: Senate Committee on Government Operations

Date: March 11, 2014

Subject: Request for annual testimony from the Joint Fiscal Office re: fiscal notes

Dear members of the Joint Fiscal Committee:

We have been considering S.258 in our committee. The bill as introduced would require any bill that would affect the expenditures or revenues of the State or of a municipality to be accompanied by a fiscal note prepared by the Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) when the bill is voted out of a standing committee.

While we appreciate the information that a fiscal note provides, we are also aware that preparing such notes can be time consuming. Instead of requiring a fiscal note for all such bills, we have determined that at this time, it is more appropriate to narrow the scope of requiring fiscal notes. Therefore, we will be recommending that a fiscal note only be required if a bill would create a new felony or increase the penalty on an existing penalty.

However, we would like to continue to discuss whether other types of bills should be accompanied by a fiscal note. With this in mind, we are writing to request that annually, each January, the JFO provide testimony to our Committee on the following:

- (1) The number of requests for fiscal notes made to JFO in the previous year;
- (2) The number of fiscal notes the JFO prepared;
- (3) The time it took JFO to produce those fiscal notes; and
- (4) The types of bills for which the fiscal notes were prepared.

Please advise if there are any issues with this request. Unless we hear back from you, we will look forward to continuing this discussion with JFO. Thank you.