

## Legislative Fiscal Office

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## Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Sen. Richard Devlin, Senate Co-Chair  
Rep. Nancy Nathanson, House Co-Chair

Sen. Betsy Johnson, Senate Co-Vice Chair  
Sen. Jackie Winters, Senate Co-Vice Chair  
Rep. Dan Rayfield, House Co-Vice Chair  
Rep. Greg Smith, House Co-Vice Chair

**To:** Ways and Means Full Committee

**From:** Public Safety Subcommittee

**Re:** HB 5015 Department of Justice

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**Senator Winters:** “HB 5015 is the budget bill for the Department of Justice. The Department is responsible for general legal counsel and supervision of all legal actions in which the state is a party or has an interest. DOJ is also responsible for several other programs including child support enforcement, crime victims’ compensation, consumer protection, regulation of charitable organizations, and supporting the law enforcement community.

The budget totals \$539 million total funds budget, including \$83.6 million General Fund, \$305.5 million Other Funds, and \$149.9 million Federal Funds. The total funds budget is a 5.9% decrease from the 2015-17 legislatively approved budget and a 3.2% increase from the 2017-19 current service level budget. The budget includes 1,304 positions and 1,292.55 FTE. NonLimited expenditure authority is removed from the budget and replaced with Limited expenditure authority.

The decrease in the agency’s budget is from the elimination of one-time funding for Phase Two of the Child Support Division’s information technology project, the elimination of unneeded expenditure limitation, the capture of Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement savings, the reduction of the Defense of Criminal Convictions for caseload savings, and the elimination of vacant positions.

The budget includes funding for: enhanced Medicaid Fraud; the Titan Fusion Center; homeland security; internet crimes against children; prosecution resources; Victims of Crime Act funding; additional legal services for agencies; backfill of a revenue reduction in child support; and investments in information technology, budget, and accounting staff. The Defense of Criminal Convictions is funded at the agency’s caseload forecast.

The budget includes a one-time fund shift of General Fund to punitive damage awards in the Crime Victims' Services Division, which will be restored in the 2019-21 biennium.

The 2017-19 billable Attorney General rate for agencies will increase from \$175 for the 2015-17 biennium to \$182 and is estimated to generate \$175 million. The rate is a 4% increase over the prior 2015-17 biennium.

The budget report includes three budget notes. DOJ is to report to the Legislature in 2018 with options for providing more effective and cost-efficient legal and other services to state agencies and on how the agency bills for legal and other services. DOJ is also to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly or to the Emergency Board if the compensation adjustment for attorneys exceeds the standard compensation adjustment for management service employees in the Executive Branch of state government.

The Subcommittee approved the Department's key performance measures and updated targets, with instructions that a standard in-depth review be undertaken.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends HB 5015 be amended by the –2 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended.”