

**Fifty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 4, 2005**

HOUSE BILL NO. 1075
(Political Subdivisions Committee)
(At the request of the State Auditor)

AN ACT to amend and reenact section 54-10-14 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to payment of audit fees by political subdivisions.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Section 54-10-14 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

54-10-14. Political subdivisions - Audits - Fees - Alternative audits and reports. The state auditor shall audit the following political subdivisions once every two years, except as provided in this section or otherwise by law:

1. Counties.
2. Cities.
3. Park districts.
4. School districts.
5. Firefighters relief associations.
6. Airport authorities.
7. Public libraries.
8. Water resource districts.
9. Garrison Diversion Conservancy District.
10. Rural fire protection districts.
11. Special education districts.
12. Area career and technology centers.
13. Correction centers.
14. Recreation service districts.
15. Weed boards.
16. Irrigation districts.
17. Rural ambulance service districts.
18. Southwest water authority.
19. Regional planning councils.
20. Soil conservation districts.

The state auditor shall charge the political subdivision an amount equal to the fair value of the audit and any other services rendered. ~~The political subdivision audited shall pay to the state treasurer the fees for the audit performed by the state auditor. The state treasurer shall deposit the fees~~ must be deposited in the state auditor operating account. The state treasurer shall credit the state auditor operating account with the amount of interest earnings attributable to the deposits in that account. Expenses relating to political subdivision audits must be paid from the state auditor operating account, within the limits of legislative appropriation.

In lieu of conducting an audit every two years, the state auditor may require annual reports from school districts with less than one hundred enrolled students, cities with less than three hundred population, park districts with less than two hundred thousand dollars of annual receipts, and other political subdivisions subject to this section, or otherwise provided by law, with less than one hundred thousand dollars of annual receipts. The reports must contain the financial information required by the state auditor. The state auditor also may make any additional examination or audit determined necessary in addition to the annual report. When a report is not filed, the state auditor may charge the political subdivision an amount equal to the fair value of the additional examination or audit and any other services rendered. The state auditor may charge a political subdivision a fee not to exceed fifty dollars an hour for the costs of reviewing the annual report.

A political subdivision, at the option of its governing body, may be audited by a certified public accountant or licensed public accountant rather than by the state auditor. The public accountant shall comply with generally accepted government auditing standards for audits of political subdivisions. The report must be in the form and content required by the state auditor. The number of copies of the audit report requested by the state auditor must be filed with the state auditor when the public accountant delivers the audit report to the political subdivision. The state auditor shall review the audit report to determine if the report is in the required form and has the required content, and if the audit meets generally accepted government auditing standards. The state auditor also may periodically review the public accountant's workpapers to determine if the audit meets generally accepted government auditing standards. If the report is in the required form and has the required content, and the report and workpapers comply with generally accepted government auditing standards, the state auditor shall accept the audit report. The state auditor may charge the political subdivision a fee of up to fifty dollars an hour, but not to exceed five hundred dollars per review, for the related costs of reviewing the audit report and workpapers.

A political subdivision may not pay a public accountant for an audit until the state auditor has accepted the audit. However, a political subdivision may make progress payments to the public accountant. A political subdivision shall retain twenty percent of any progress payment until the audit report is accepted by the state auditor.

The state auditor may require the correction of any irregularities, objectionable accounting procedures, or illegal actions on the part of the governing board, officers, or employees of the political subdivision disclosed by the audit report or workpapers, and failure to make the corrections shall result in audits being resumed by the state auditor until the irregularities, objectionable accounting procedures, or illegal actions are corrected.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Fifty-ninth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1075.

House Vote: Yeas 91 Nays 0 Absent 3

Senate Vote: Yeas 47 Nays 0 Absent 0

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 2005.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 2005.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 2005,

at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State