

Legislative Report

# \$1.1 Billion—One Department

By Sen. Tom Jones  
District 17

Last week the Joint Appropriations Committee met with the Department of Social Services for three days and heard testimony from their department. The requested budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year was \$1.1 billion. This included a \$24 million increase from the prior year. \$452 million is state General Fund and \$643 million is federal money. The DSS part of state government employs 1,656 full time staff. Of the South Dakotans they serve, 69 percent are children.

Before I go any further, I should apologize for all the numbers that will follow. Numbers can be boring and that is not my intent.

The Division of Economic Assistance controls about \$84 million: \$60 million is federal and \$24 million is state funds. The major players in this area are: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for

Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and others.

The Division of Medical Services handles the Medicaid state plan. This division serves low-income children, pregnant women, adults, elderly, disabled, children in foster care, etc. It is a huge part of our budget. A total of \$585 million is mainly spent on four areas: health care services, physician services, inpatient hospital, outpatient, and prescription drugs. The Division of Adult Services and Aging serves adults 60 years of age and older, adults with disabilities, and victims of crime. Its total budget is \$180 million.

The Division of Child Support Services provides services for almost 60,000 families who need help collecting child support. Its budget is between \$7 and \$8 million.

We spent a long time discussing the State Employees Health Insurance Plan with the

Human Services Department. How to ease the ever-increasing rise of these costs was the main portion of this important area. We listened to an actuarial report suggesting three methods to address this issue. In the actuarial firm's opinion, the best method for South Dakota was to set up a reserve fund and we should determine at what level of confidence we could basically self-insure ourselves. This discussion has been centered on the fact that a very few claimants, through no-fault of their own, are a large amount of dollars spent. The top 5 percent of Medicaid recipients represent 57 percent of all costs.

Bills passed by the House of Representatives are beginning to cross over to the Senate side.

Again, if you have questions or concerns, please contact me at sen.jones@state.sd.us.

**Tom Jones, Senator**  
District 17  
South Dakota

## VERMILLION POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

01/27/14 18:20 – The caller was a caregiver for an elderly citizen and requested assistance with helping him up after he had fallen. The citizen was uninjured and officers assisted the caregiver.

01/28/14 05:50 – While on patrol, an officer stopped a vehicle because it did not have rear taillights. The driver had a revoked driver's status and was cited.

01/28/14 07:14 – Caller reported a city streetlight had been hit by a car and knocked over. Officers collected evidence in the area. Under investigation.

01/28/14 13:09 – Caller reported a hit and run accident on her vehicle parked on the side of the road. Investigation revealed some information about the suspect vehicle. Under investigation.

01/29/14 01:12 – Caller requested a welfare check on an individual who had made statements via text message about harming himself. When officers contacted the individual, they found marijuana and other drug paraphernalia in his possession. He was arrested.

01/30/14 23:23 – Courts Services requested officer locate two juveniles who were on probation and suspected of drinking. Officers found the juveniles, they had been drinking and charges were referred to the State's Attorney.

01/31/14 02:39 – While on patrol, an officer saw a vehicle violate several traffic laws and stopped the vehicle. The driver appeared intoxicated and was arrested for DWI.

01/31/14 09:02 – Caller reported a vehicle passed the school bus while the stop sign and lights were activated. Investigation corroborated the caller's

account. Information was forwarded to the states attorney's office for charging.

01/31/14 15:18 – Caller reported a relative had used his name to open a cable/internet account without his permission. The account had accumulated over \$1,000 in charges and had been sent to collections. Detectives started a theft identity case.

01/31/14 23:49 – While on patrol, officer found a man urinating in an alley and contacted him. He was underage and intoxicated. He was cited and released.

02/01/14 01:21 – Caller reported a loud house party from a nearby residence. Officers investigated but found no house party at the reported residence. However, they did find one at another nearby residence. As they approached the home, they saw a man urinating in the front yard and recognized he had warrants for his arrest out of Clay County. He was arrested. The renter was contacted and admitted there had been a party there earlier that included fireworks, but everyone had since left. He was warned.

02/01/14 02:40 – Caller reported unknown person(s) had entered a business vehicle. Officers investigated and discovered the unknown party had entered the vehicle and discharged a fire extinguisher that was in the vehicle. There was fresh snow on the ground and there was a single set of prints leading to the bus and away from the bus. Officers followed these prints for about 150 yards to a residence's side door. Officers contacted one of the occupants and asked about the vehicle entry.

02/01/14 03:21 – Caller reported that neighbor dogs were barking incessantly.

Officer responded and identified two dogs at two nearby residents barking continuously; the time was 3:21 a.m. Officers contacted both residents and woke them and explained the dogs could not be barking and disturbing the neighbors. Both understood and quieted their dogs.

02/01/14 05:27 – Caller reported a man and woman fighting outside a nearby residence. Officers responded and eventually got a woman to answer the door at the residence. She denied any fight in the yard, which was inconsistent with observations that her pants were wet and the yard has snow in it. She was also intoxicated and on probation. Her probation officer requested she be taken into custody and the home searched. In the home, officers found two men. One was also on probation and intoxicated.

02/01/14 15:18 – Caller reported she had tried to take a child home that had spent the night at her house, and could not find the parents. Officers determined the parents had been arrested for probation violations involving alcohol consumption. Officers worked with DSS and the courts and one of the parents was released to care for the child.

02/01/14 23:43 – Officers responded to a report of a highly intoxicated person at a local bar. Officers found the woman to be in the care of friends who were capable of caring for her. The woman was under 21 and had been contacted a week before and cited for drinking underage. She was cited again.

**Total Records: 16**

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