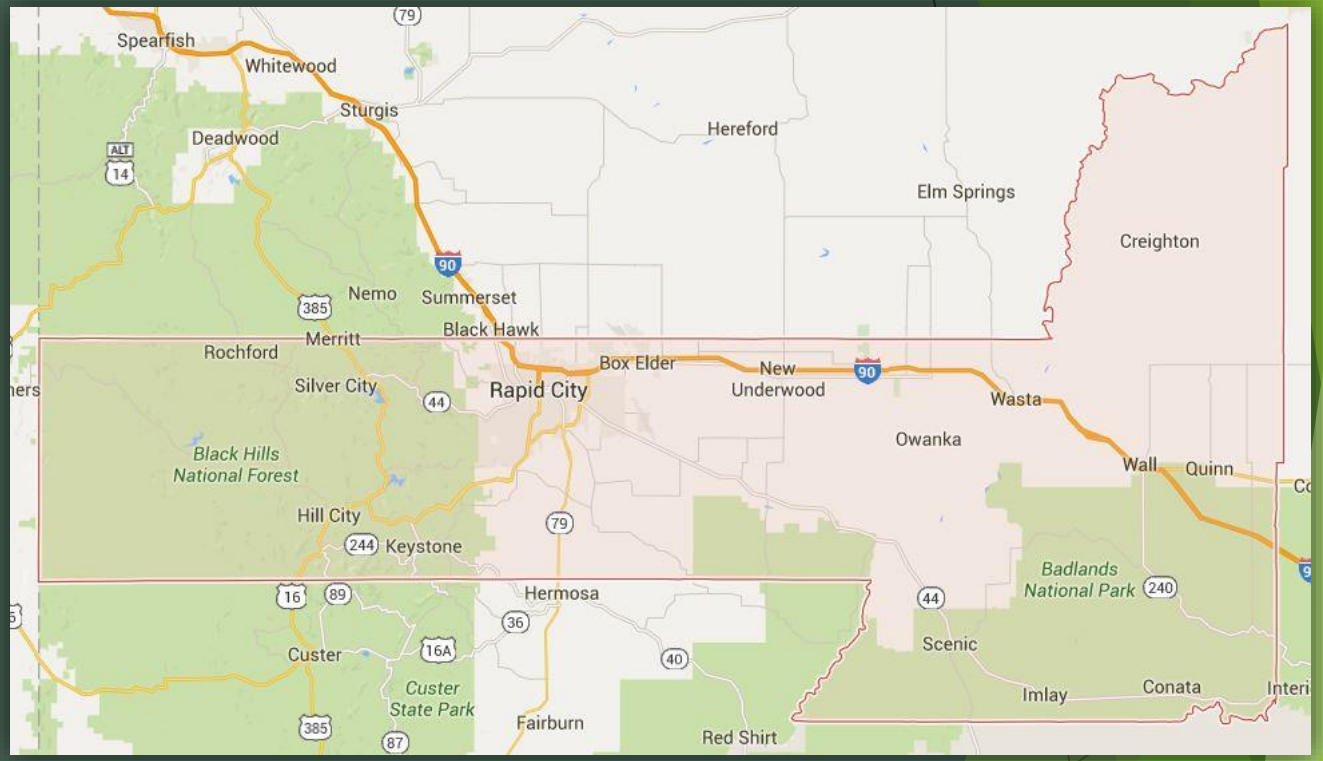
County Government Interim Committee

Pennington County, SD Presentation

October 28, 2015

Pennington County, SD in a snapshot…

- 1,766,562 Total Acres
- 706,470 Federal Acres
- 2,784 square miles
- 108,242 Census Population – 2014 Estimate
- 836.56 Total Miles of Roads
- 139 Bridges
- 152 Livestock Guards
- 3,222 Culverts
- 11,948 Traffic Signs



Pennington County has approximately 53,111 parcels of property with a value of near $9 billion.

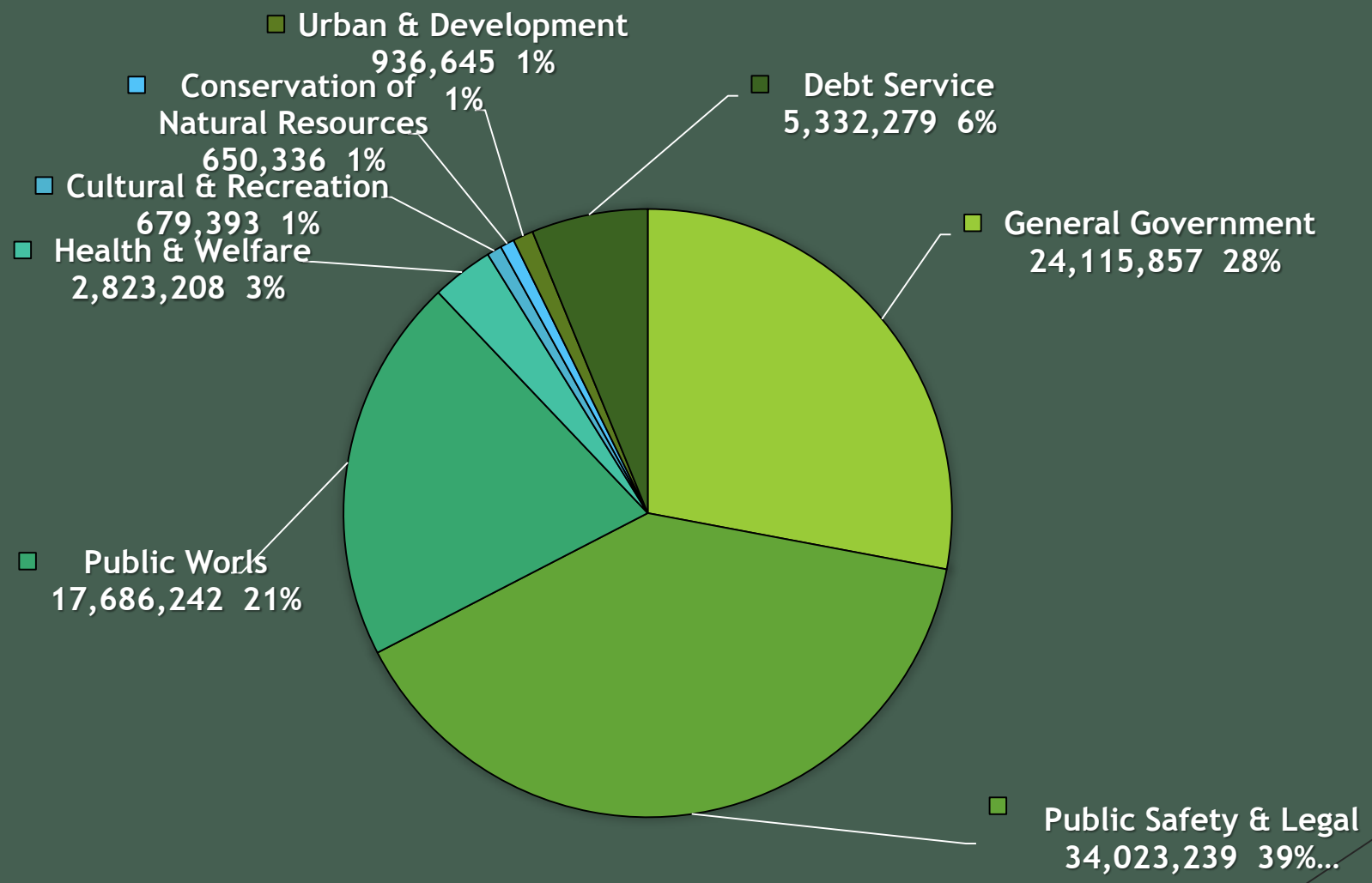
The questions posed by the Legislature…

- If a County is unable to generate more revenue, what are they going to have to change or cut?
- What services would they no longer provide?
- What laws would they not follow?
- What are their priorities?

The following slides are the responses by Pennington County departments and offices.

The largest expense for any County is staffing which includes wages and benefits. Reductions in staff has the potential for increased liability for the County such as the jail, highway, law enforcement, etc. Other areas would have an impact on the way services are provided to the citizens.

2015 ANNUAL BUDGET
$86,268,469



Annual Tax Increment District (TID) Data For Pennington County

Tax Year	TID Increment	County Levy	Annual Dollars Lost	CPI	Accumulated Loss of ability to levy
2010	542,149,752	4.843	$2,625,631	0.00%	$2,625,631
2011	418,616,173	4.843	$2,027,358	2.10%	$4,708,127
2012	348,841,657	5.21	$1,817,465	3.00%	$6,666,836
2013	420,920,793	5.21	$2,192,997	2.10%	$8,999,837
2014	391,842,177	4.879	$1,911,798	1.40%	$11,037,633
2015	442,635,972	4.822	$2,134,391	1.50%	$13,337,588

Source: Pennington County Auditor

Auditor

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$446,706	$502,680	8

- The Auditor's Office is responsible for auditing all accounts and maintaining all financial records in and for Pennington County. This includes processing payroll, preparing the annual budget, establishing levies and apportioning of all tax collections. Monthly audits of all cash and cash items in the hands of the County Treasurer and a verification of bank account balances are performed. Annual Financial Reports are prepared indicating the receipts and expenditures, liabilities and equity, and assets of the County.

1. The only non-mandated service the Auditors office provides is the issuance of new passports. This service raises about $10,000 for the county to reimburse us for staff time and goes into the General Fund.
   A. Result
      i. Loss of Revenue for Pennington County

Buildings and Grounds

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$3,597,796	$3,981,900	35

- The Buildings & Grounds Department is responsible for operations and maintenance of all county facilities. It also coordinates planning and construction of existing and new facilities as required in SDCL 7-25.
  - Buildings & Grounds staff consists of highly skilled individuals in many different areas who save Pennington County tens of thousands of dollars each year. They have the ability to monitor and run the facilities in the most effective and efficient manner and are able to repair the systems critical for keeping the facilities running. This includes monitoring the electrical bills, completing repairs/remodels in-house and saving on design costs.
    - Counties can have older facilities. If there wasn't a highly skilled staff, it would end up costing more to hire outside contractors, plumbers, electricians, HVAC, etc. to complete the required work.
    - Counties are also required to provide space for the Court system. This places a large financial and staffing burden on the Counties as well to meet the demands of the Courts.

Commission Office

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$312,865	$373,800	1.5+5

- Commissioners are statutorily required per SDCL 7-8-1 however separate office administration is not.
- The Commission Office consists of two staff members, the Office Manager and a Staff Assistant. These individuals handle the daily administration of Commission business including the preparation of meeting agendas and documents, Commission scheduling, walk in citizen traffic, phone calls, Department Head support, other directives as set forth by the Board, etc.

1. If faced with a funding shortage, the first reduction would be made in the number of office staff.
   A. Results
      i. This would slow down response time to the needs of the Citizens, Commissioners, Department and employees.
      ii. Place additional stress on the Auditor's office who is the clerk for the Commissioners as defined in statute.

Emergency Services Communications Center 911-Dispatch

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$3,349,875	$3,517,226	46.5

- The Emergency Services Communications Center is a public safety answering point serving as the community's first line of contact with public safety authorities of Rapid City, Pennington County and Jackson County. Answering both 9-1-1 and non-emergency requests for law enforcement, fire and EMS and dispatching emergency responders for the sheriff's offices, police departments, fire departments and EMS agencies.

1. Longer wait times for both citizens and responders calling without an emergency
2. Longer processing/turnaround time for audio recordings for detectives/investigators and the SAO/PDO
3. Services eliminated for all user agency/outside agency training

Equalization

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$1,387,931	$1,579,817	22

- Duty is to annually assess all taxable real property in the County required by SDCL 10-3-1 & 10-3-3

1. Reduction in staff numbers.
   A. Results
      i. Longer re-appraisal times. Full staffed time is re-appraisal goal is 7 years.
      ii. Less accuracy in assessments which would affect municipalities, school system, county, townships, fire districts and road districts revenues.

2. We would not eliminate our property search website though not a mandated service by law.
   A. Results
      i. If we did, it would result in increased phone calls and foot traffic in office thus requiring more staff. Insurance agencies, real estate agents, etc. would call for the information they now receive free online.

Emergency Management

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$466,149	$358,400	4

- The roles and responsibilities of Pennington County Emergency Management are codified in State law (34-48A) and further defined by the annual State and Local Agreement with individual counties and the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management as signatories. Emergency Management serves as the countywide agency for the purpose of overseeing the planning, response, recovery and mitigation of any and all major disasters/emergencies that occur within the county.

1. Reduce Staff
   A. Results
      i. Reduction of a single staff member equates to a 28% loss of staff hours.
      ii. Possible loss of eligibility for mitigation grant dollars, possibility of increased loss of life and increased property damage during large scale disasters/emergencies due to lack of pre-disaster mitigation projects.
      iii. possibility of increased loss of life, increased property damage, and environmental impacts due to ineffective coordination, relationship building, and pre-planning among response organizations during large scale disasters/emergencies due to lack of a comprehensive exercise program and sub-standard planning. Possibility of increased loss of life due to the inability to effectively educate the public on disaster awareness and preparation.

Emergency Management continued…

iv. Loss of command and control, situational awareness, and common operating picture capability during large scale disasters/emergencies due to staff, training, and exercise deficiencies in the Emergency Operations Center. Possible increased loss of life due to degraded public warning systems training, exercise, and infrastructure (repair, replacement, & maintenance.)

v. Possible loss of eligibility and/or reduction in qualification due to outdated/non-compliant plans and/or degraded ability to perform adequate damage assessments. Increased exposure to liability due to ineffective grant program management/oversight.

Fire Administration

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$246,997	$307,701	1.5

- The Pennington County Fire Administration does not provide any direct fire suppression activities. This duty is provided by the volunteer and two career fire departments that serve Pennington County. However, Fire Administration provides crucial assistance to the Pennington County Fire Departments. These services include but are not limited to; providing Workman's compensation insurance to the volunteer's, providing liability insurance for all County fire vehicles, coordinate's county sponsored training, and assist's in the purchase of firefighting equipment and vehicles. The Fire Administration is the focal point of all fire-related activities in the county serving as the liaison to media relations, the Board of Commissioners, law enforcement, and State and National agencies.

1. Discontinue county sponsored training for structural, wild land, and leadership.
   A. Results
      i. This would require the 20 volunteer fire departments to organize, sponsor, coordinate, obtain instructors, and provide certification. Resulting in fractured, less effective, and more expensive training.

Fire Administration continued…

2. Cut Workers Compensation insurance
   A. Results
      i. County provided workers compensation insurance is required by SDCL and considers volunteers county employees. Each of the 20 volunteer fire department would have to obtain, pay, file claims, track and insure that their members were covered. Individual VFD's would pay more in premiums than current county wide policy
3. Reduce Staff
   A. Results
      i. The Fire Administration would not be able to provide information on many fire issues, such as fireworks, burn bans, and rangeland fire agreements to the Board of Commissioners or Planning & Zoning. Each one of the 20 volunteers would have to attend County meetings to comment on these issues.
      ii. Public connection – the general public would have to spend a considerable amount of time trying to locate phone numbers, fire chiefs, where to get burn permits,
      iii. Coordination with federal/state wild-land agencies - each of the 20 volunteer fire departments would have to attend the meetings that are held during the daytime with other agencies.

Health and Human Services

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$1,519,863	$1,742,860	17

- Pennington County Health And Human Services (PCHHS) serves as a fulcrum within the community to combat problems and provide support for both mandated and non-mandated programs. These programs include areas such as economic assistance for rent and utilities, housing needs, mental health needs, medical needs, burials, medication needs, and veteran services. Additionally, PCHHS provides what could be considered the best intensive case management services available in this area for programs that have impacted clients and tax payers alike.

1. Eliminate the Rebound Reentry Program
   A. Results
      i. the financial impact on the county would be substantial by not offering intensive case management and programming within Pennington County Jail and the community.

Health and Human Services continued…

1. Eliminate Crisis Care Case Management/ Support Coordinator Services
   A. Results
      i. The failure to engage clients in appropriate services to address mental health needs can be detrimental in a variety of ways including increase in homelessness, failure to obtain medications, increase in crime rates and the potential for an increase in suicides.
2. Reduce Staff
   A. Results
      i. Longer lobby and call wait times for clients. (This could be detrimental to work/health of many of these clients.)
      ii. Longer Processing time for medical claims. (This could be detrimental to work/health of many of these clients.)
      iii. A possibility of costing Pennington County hundreds of thousands of dollars if the appropriate actions are not followed.

Health and Human Services continued…

1. Reduce replacement of major office equipment such as: computers, printers, fax machines, cell phones and copy machines.
   A. Results
      i. This would impact the overall function of this office.

Highway Department

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$10,356,382	$12,470,571	50

- The Pennington County Highway Department is responsible for 837 miles of road, 139 bridges, . In addition to routine repair and maintenance, this responsibility includes snow removal operations and major reconstruction projects.
  - If funding were an issue, changes would be made in how the Highway program is operated. This could include less staff which would result in slower response times in weather events. This creates a safety issue as the topography of western Pennington County creates dangerous conditions the Highway department must stay on top of.
  - Road maintenance projects could be delayed or reduced – including repairing potholes.
  - Bridge maintenance would suffer. Pennington County has 25 bridges alone that were built in 1972 after the flood and are facing the end of their designed lifespan.
  - Construction projects could be delayed.
  - Mowing roadside ditches could also be reduced decreasing safety.
    - *All of these items can result in increased costs in the future due to the additional deterioration and increasing supply and labor costs.*

Human Resources

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$121,818	$130,330	1.5

- The Human Resources Office functions as the centralized job application agent for all Pennington County Departments. This includes posting all available position openings, processing all applications received, and documenting equal employment opportunity and affirmative action statistics.
- The Human Resources function is a Statutorily Authorized function, meaning Pennington County could operate without its services. However, the absence of an HR department does not alleviate those duties from needing to be performed. Someone in the County will still need to perform the onboarding of new employees, administering the benefits programs, termination paperwork, etc. A substandard option would be for each County office to hire their own HR professional, which would be costly and provide inconsistent practices. Inconsistent practices can lead to lawsuits. One wrongful termination or discrimination suit can cost the County hundreds of thousands of dollars. Another costly option would be to retain HR legal advice from a labor law attorney, which currently a good labor law attorney will have a billable rate of $250 or more. The amount of assistance an organization of Pennington Counties size would require from a Labor Law attorney would wipe out an perceived savings from eliminating the Human Resources department. The greatest asset the County has it its people. Professional and available Human Resource assistance to the managers, supervisors and line level employees saves the County money in both the short and long term.

Information Technology

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$897,554	$973,522	13

- The Pennington County Information Technology Department provides a variety of services to County Departments to support the business needs of Pennington County. These services include consulting, system development, Internet, strategic planning, data center services, application support and network services. Data processing is the only function of the IT Department that is Statutorily Required. However, without one unified IT Department each individual department would potentially have their own IT Department or IT Specialist within their department. This would not be cost effective for Pennington County.
  - Support departments: 19
  - Support users: 600+
  - Support computers and peripherals: 1,500+
  - Support servers: 75+
  - Support cameras: 400+
  - Support facilities: 15+
  - Support in-house developed applications 75+
  - Support off-the-shelf applications 24+
  - IT Help Desk tickets closed: 5,000+ per year
  - E-mail messages received: 3,000+ per day
  - Blocked spam e-mail messages: 4,000+ per day
  - Website visits: 2,500 per day

Information Technology continued…

1. Delay the scheduled replacement of all computers for all County departments by 6 months
   A. Results
      i. This would increase the risk of a system failure.
2. Delay the scheduled replacement of all network switches by 1 year.
   A. Results
      i. This would increase the risk of a system failure.
3. Implement a mandatory 2 day per month work furlough for all non-exempt IT employees.
   A. Results
      i. This would result in a reduction in support services to all County computers and systems.

Planning & Zoning

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$443,275	$496,448	8

- Responsible for the development and enforcement of Ordinances that regulate matters such as land use, construction activities, on-site wastewater treatment systems, public nuisances, subdivision improvements, floodplain, and water quality. The Department also reviews current development proposals such as Building Permits, Conditional Use Permits, Rezoning's, Subdivisions, and Variances. Much of What the Planning Department does is mandated by Federal or State Law.

1. Reduce Staff
   A. Results
      i. Turn-around time on permits/reports/etc. would increase.
2. Eliminate free and low cost services
   A. Results
      i. Charge more for services that are offered and charge for things that haven't had a cost in the past.
3. Require Surveyor's, Engineer's, or third party individuals to perform necessary functions that are currently provided by staff.
   A. Results
      i. This would be an increase in cost for Pennington County Taxpayers.

Public Defender

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$1,751,655	$2,187,079	27

- The Pennington County Public Defenders Office is appointed by the courts of Pennington County to represent all indigent persons who by law are entitled to be represented by an attorney in the proceeding in which they are involved. The attorneys in the Public Defender's office primarily represent adults and juveniles charged with crimes, but the office also represents persons on mental and alcohol commitments, other juvenile court proceedings, and appeals and post-conviction proceedings.
- The County's responsibility continues to increase. The Public Defender's Office was assigned the following number of cases the past three years:

Year	Cases	% increase
2012	4,766	
2013	5,080	6.5%
2014	5,753	13.2 %
Three year % increase =		**20.7 %**

Public Advocate 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)
$204,500	$210,000

- Indigent defense is funded by Counties per state law mandate. SDCL § 23A-40-7. To meet the state mandate, Pennington County maintains an office of a public defender, contracts with a law office for conflicts and pays private attorney bills for additional conflict cases.

Public Defender continued…

- The County must provide additional staff and resources to meet its responsibilities. Any new crimes enacted by the State legislature expand the definition of "criminal behavior." Any indigent person arrested for the new crime, must be provided a lawyer at taxpayer expense.
- One such example is SDCL 22-42-5.1 which criminalizes the ingestion of any controlled substance as a Class 5 or Class 6 felony. South Dakota is the only state in America to classify such conduct as a felony. The Public Defender's office was assigned 196 cases where felony ingesting was the most severe charge and the person was not also charged with possession of a controlled substance. The American Bar Association standards set limits on how many cases a public defender may handle. No public defender may represent more than 150 felony cases in a year.
- Therefore, that one state law, once enforced, mandates the County hire an additional 1.3 public defenders to represent indigent persons accused of committing that crime. That does not include all the cases the public defender's office conflicts out of, which the County is also financially responsible for.
- Every other State criminalizes the same behavior as a misdemeanor. Standards allow one attorney to represent 400 misdemeanor cases per year.
- This is one example from one legislative session. For the past thirty years, the South Dakota legislature has passed new criminal laws ever expanding the criminal code. Counties are left with the cost of prosecuting, defending, jailing, transporting, medicating and rehabilitating each of these new "criminals."

Register of Deeds

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$427,264	$464,120	7

- The Register of Deeds keeps full and true computerized, scanned and filmed permanent records of deeds, mortgages and other instruments authorized by law to be recorded. Filings consist of UCC's, fictitious names, bills of sale, county indigent liens, sheriff's levy, personal property liens, federal tax liens, state tax liens and other miscellaneous documents. Birth, death and marriage certificates are issued at the county level from the South Dakota Department of Health Vital Records system.
  - Everything that is done in the Register of Deeds is mandated by State Statute.
  - Following are just a few of the statutes that established and regulate the Register of Deeds: SDCL 7-9, 43-28, 43-4, 11-3, 44-9, 44-2, 57A-9, 34-37, etc.
  - In 2012, the SD Legislature passed as proposed by the Register of Deeds, a recording fee increase for the Register of Deeds that also created the Modernization and Preservation Fund. The increased fee has helped maintain the revenue collection to the level when a large volume of documents were being recorded in 2003 through 2007, but have now dropped off due to the economic downturn. The Modernization and Preservation Fund has helped many counties set up systems preserving the permanent documents as required by State Statue. Preservation of the permanent records was brought home to many more of us when the Corson County Court House burned down.

Register of Deeds continued…

1. Reduced Personnel
   A. Results
      i. If anybody other than the part-time personnel were eliminated this department would not be able to complete the document recording and filing that is required by State and Federal Statute, and provide serve that is expected by the general public.
      ii. Staff burn out and resignations would occur
2. Reduce replacement of major office equipment such as: computers, printers, scanners, fax machines, and copy machines.
   A. Results
      i. This would impact the overall function of this office and eventually bring the Pennington County Register of Deeds to a dead stop. The purchasing of computers and scanners, and incorporating modernization software has allowed my office to function with a smaller staff. But the staff is now being pushed to their limit because of growing population of Pennington County and the increased demands of our time to teach and help the public to do searches; and still get the document recording and filing work load completed as required by state statute.

Sheriff's Office – Law Enforcement

- The Pennington County Sheriff's Office has 372 employees, an annual budget of approximately $28 million, and serves over 100,000 citizens spread out over Pennington County's 2,784 square miles. We also serve a high number of visitors and tourists to our area as Pennington County is home to Mount Rushmore National Monument and Ellsworth Air Force Base.
  1. Reduce Staff
     A. Results
        i. Longer response times for citizens, potential safety issues for deputy's, and longer investigation times.
  2. Defer Building and Vehicle Maintenance
     A. Results
        i. Potential safety concerns

	Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
24/7 Program	$368,271	$466,111	7
CCADP/Detox	$10,848,580	$11,395,142	38.5
Jail	$10,848,580	$11,395,142	140.5
Juvenile Alternatives	$636,124	$549,794	2
Juvenile Services Center	$3,310,728	$3,676,880	44
Law Enforcement	$8,150,872	$8,333,186	119.8
Life Enrichment Center	$1,127,640	$1,367,617	21

States Attorney

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$4,130,496	$4,207,846	42

- The Pennington County State's Attorney is the chief prosecutor of adult and juvenile crimes in Pennington County. Other responsibilities include protecting children who may be living in abusive or neglectful homes, representing the County in all legal matters, working with other states in returning fugitives and extraditing suspects, etc. The State's Attorney Office also has a Juvenile Diversion Program which is designed to help juvenile offenders understand the consequences of their crimes and help them make better choices about their futures and Victim's Assistance which is concerned with the rights and fair treatment of victims and witnesses during their contact with the criminal justice system.

1. Eliminate prosecution of certain classes of cases – Exactly which sorts would depend in large part on the degree of shortage, but some possibilities include Insufficient Funds Checks, Petty Theft, Grand Theft (under $2,500), Trespass, Poss. Of Marijuana, Possession of Controlled Substances. In short, anything non-violent would be on the chopping block in extreme circumstances.

States Attorney continued…

1. Eliminate Victims' Assistance as a department – Because there are elements that Victims' Assistance does that are mandated by statute, the function has to be covered. But instead of personal contact and assistance, we would likely be reduced to form notifications without follow-up.
2. Eliminate Diversion/Specialty Courts – This is an option that I believe would generate short-term savings and long-term costs. Our full participation in the diversion process and specialty courts (Drug Court, DUI Court and Veteran's Court) assists those courts in truly getting people out of the system, which is always our goal in the long haul. We are also deeply involved in selecting the participants in those programs, meaning our withdrawal would likely result in poorer selections and results.

Treasurer

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$923,867	$964,293	18

- The collector of the funds utilized by the state, the county, municipalities, townships, special taxing districts including schools and most recently the possibility of being instrumental in assisting with the obligation recovery center retrieval of funds. When asked the question staffing would be the only area of means to reduce spending in this office. To cut staff would most definitely have the following effect:

1. Reduce Staff
   A. Results
      i. Increase in time tax payers are away from their work while waiting in line to do motor vehicle business
      ii. Delay in tax payments being posted and processed which could affect cash flow within the county, municipalities, townships, special taxing districts and state.
      iii. Increase in overtime to existing staff to complete mandated requirements in a timely fashion – could increase the turn over within the office which in turn would create additional workload in training new staff
      iv. Delay in processing time for all title transactions and vehicle renewals sent off to the state
      v. Delay in balancing and ultimately depositing daily funds effecting daily interest on investments

Weed and Pest

Budget 2014 (Actual)	Budget 2015 (Approved)	Employees
$294,544	$288,191	6

- It is the goal of Pennington County Weed & Pest Department to conduct and manage a sound, integrated weed & pest management program with the resources available. This goal will be accomplished through willing cooperation with other government agencies, private property owners, and surrounding counties.

1. Cut Seasonal weed spraying staff
   A. Results
      i. This would affect the county's ability to enter government contracts for weed spraying services within Pennington which would effect the amount of revenue that this department contributes. This would also likely mean less effective weed management on government lands we have agreements with, creating more acres of weeds. An increase in noxious weeds would affect production and value of agricultural lands in the county.
2. Cut seasonal weed enforcement staff
   A. Results
      i. This would affect the county's ability to respond to noxious weed complaints and educate landowners on noxious weeds through volunteer compliance letters. This would also result in an increase of noxious weed acres in the county. Many landowners won't control noxious weeds if they are not notified, because it's not a priority for them or many times they are not aware of the dangers and state law requirements. An increase in noxious weeds would affect production and value of agricultural lands in the county.

Thank you! We sincerely appreciate your time! Pennington County looks forward to working with the Legislature to find positive solutions for our South Dakota Counties!

PENNINGTON COUNTY

Document prepared by the Commission Office staff with assistance from each department. For questions, please call (605) 394-2171.