

COMMUNICATIONS ALLOWANCE INFORMATION
For Legislative Council
August 2014

IT Allowance - under current program

- 2013-2014: \$120,000 appropriation
- Balance: House - \$27,882.99
Senate - \$15,600.51
- Amounts represent balance as only 53 out of 68 eligible representatives and 20 out of 30 eligible senators claimed all or a portion of their allowance.

Traditional Expenses

- Stationery costs for 2013: \$16,463
 - ▶ We could develop electronic letterhead for all legislators that would allow print-on-demand. A decision would need to be made on personalized envelopes. We could print standard stationery for leadership and also generic letterhead and envelopes for the House and Senate.
 - ▶ Personalized envelopes, app \$45.00 (500) (150 @ \$45 = \$6,750)
 - ▶ Leadership stationery letterhead and envelopes (1000) from \$154.31 to \$211.76 (14 @ \$200.00 = \$2,800.00)
 - ▶ Estimated savings of \$6,900
- Printing = \$150,000 (balance after print shop income) at print shop includes committees, floor sessions, state agencies, and staff copies. Could reduce number of hard copies for legislator or staff as people go paperless for some savings.
- Land-line Phones = could save on one-time set-up and disconnect fees, and monthly dial tone, equipment, and feature fees. Only leadership phones are maintained throughout the interim; if some choose to have their phones disconnected, there could be savings accrued.

Proposed Expenses

- \$1,500 Communications Allowance for 150 Legislators = \$225,000
- Type of allowance will determine amount of tax, so legislators will not receive the full \$1,500. If amount is used exclusively for legislative business, the amount may be an itemized expense on tax returns.
- In past sessions, holdover or returning legislators would be encouraged to apply before session starts and the current balances could be used for their IT Allowance; new legislators would be charged to the new feed bill.

Summary

\$120,000 traditional request
\$43,483 - balance in 2013 IT Allowance
\$6,900 - stationery savings

Total of estimated current costs: \$175,383

New cost: \$225,000

Approximate \$50,000 in additional cost, approximately \$333 per legislator