

I am the Stutsman County Auditor and am in opposition of HB 1508.

The State Auditor's Office has conducted annual audits for Stutsman County for many years and I feel they have always been fair in their billings to the county. At times, the fees charged have gone beyond the budgeted amounts, but we have recognized the need for extra hours put into our audits, particularly in years federal audits are required. I do not feel we have been overbilled or billed for time not spent on our audits.

Heath Erickson and his staff have been instrumental in providing guidance to our office, as well as recommending best practices moving forward. We have had some staff turnover in the past several years and they have always remained patient with us and helped walk through the audit process and paperwork. They have spent a great deal of time training on the financial worksheets, which is training we would have paid for elsewhere. I believe it is impossible for the SAO to provide an exact cost for an audit in the engagement letter, especially for new clients they have not worked with previously.

Our 2022 audit has taken more time than past audits to complete, however we also recognize the changes and challenges in the workforce over the last three years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jessica Alonge