

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**

**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**May 29, 2003**

**TO:** Honorable Tom Craddick, Speaker of the House, House of Representatives

**FROM:** John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB76** by Wise (Relating to procedures adopted by a state entity to ensure an employment preference for veterans.), **As Passed 2nd House**

**No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.**

The bill requires a public entity which ensures employment preferences for veterans to prepare and make available for public inspection a statement of, any measures taken by the entity to ensure that veterans receive the employment preference required under the law and, any remedies available through the entity for an individual entitled to a hiring preference under the law if the individual is not hired or appointed for a position with the entity.

The bill would also amend the Government Code to create a new Subchapter relating to the enforcement of veteran's employment preferences.

**Local Government Impact**

Costs to district courts, county courts, and district attorney's offices relating to the enforcement of veteran's employment preferences would depend on the number of compliance orders filed. The Tarrant County District Clerk's Office reported that there might be a small increase in overall cases filed in district court, but the number could not be estimated.

Harris County (population 3.5 million, annual budget of \$970 million) reported that the primary fiscal issue in their county would be the cost of representing a complainant by the district attorney's office. It is possible that the County Attorney's Office could represent the county and the district attorney would represent the veteran, all in a Harris County District Court, resulting in a possible multiple cost to Harris County. This cost could run into several tens of thousand dollars. Harris County also reported that no cases in which a veteran sought judicial relief for violation of the preference rule have ever been filed in the county, making the number of possible filings difficult to predict.

Smith County (population 174,706, annual budget of \$64.7 million) reported that they anticipated the number of filings to increase as veterans became aware of the availability of "pro bono" representation. The county estimated that in fiscal year 2004, costs to implement the bill would be approximately \$40,000, with costs rising in subsequent fiscal years.

**Source Agencies:** 403 Veterans Commission

**LBB Staff:** JK, WK, TB, MS, CJ