

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 11, 2003

TO: Honorable Joe Driver, Chair, House Committee on Law Enforcement

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB244 by Allen (Relating to the publication of information regarding certain registered sex offenders.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Code of Criminal Procedure in regards to publication of information regarding offenders required to register in the sex offender registration program. It is assumed that implementation of the bill would not have a significant impact on the costs of state government.

Local Government Impact

Currently, upon the release of a person convicted of an offense that requires them to register as a sex offender, local law enforcement authorities are required to notify schools and publish notices in the local newspaper ONLY if the victim is a child younger than 17 years of age. The bill would require local law enforcement authorities to notify schools and publish notices regardless of the age of the victim.

Additional costs would be incurred by local law enforcement authorities. The costs would vary depending on the number of offenders and publication costs. The Houston Police Department reports that there were 560 additional notifications they would have to publish at a cost of \$150 each, resulting in an additional publication cost of \$84,000 per year. HPD also estimated that this cost could increase approximately 8 percent to 10 percent a year, due to the increasing trend in the number of offenders and probable increases in publication costs. Even more funds would be needed for additional supplies, administrative staff and investigative time.

Law enforcement authorities are allowed to collect from the convicted person an amount equal to the cost incurred by the authority in obtaining the publication. However, recovery of the publications costs from the offender is greatly affected by the person's ability to pay.

Source Agencies: 696 Department of Criminal Justice

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