

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 12, 2003

TO: Honorable Mary Denny, Chair, House Committee on Elections

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1335 by Villarreal (Relating to the authority of certain political subdivisions to regulate political campaigns; providing a penalty.), **As Introduced**

No fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would authorize a county commissioners court, the governing body of a school district, and the governing body of a junior college district to regulate political contributions to and expenditures by a candidate for or officeholder of an elected office in the county or district, or political contributions and expenditures related to an election on a measure by the county or district. A person who violates an adopted regulation commits a Class C misdemeanor. The bill would take effect immediately if it receives two-thirds vote in each house; otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2003.

Local Government Impact

Costs to a local entity that would choose to regulate political contributions and expenditures would vary depending on the system established for carrying out the associated responsibilities. The impact would be minimal if the responsibilities were added to an existing oversight body, system, or program, as indicated by the Texas Association of School Business Officials. The impact would be minimal in a large county if, as cited by Bexar County, one new full-time position was created for fulfilling the provisions of the bill (salaries and benefits totaling between \$45,000 and \$67,000). If a political subdivision were to choose a more elaborate system, such as identified by Harris County, which would include staffing, a tracking and monitoring system, an ethics commission, and an attorney, related costs could be more significant. It is assumed, however, that a political subdivision that chooses to implement provisions of the bill would select a system within the entities' existing budget.

Source Agencies: 307 Secretary Of State, 356 Texas Ethics Commission

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