

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

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

Revision 1

**May 22, 2003**

**TO:** Honorable Bill Ratliff, Chair, Senate Committee on State Affairs

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

**IN RE: HB2496** by Branch (Relating to the date of the primary election.), **As Engrossed**

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

The bill would amend various sections of the Election Code relating to the date of primary and run-off elections.

**Local Government Impact**

Several election officials and school district officials provided information on the fiscal impact the provisions of the bill would have on local government. Because school buildings are often used as polling places and because Spring Break often occurs in the month of March, changing election days in March could have a fiscal impact.

The election administrators in Bexar County, Guadalupe County, Harris County, and Victoria County indicated that holding an election during Spring Break is more expensive than when an election is held while the schools are open; therefore, changing the date could provide a savings to counties. For example, in Harris County, where 200 of the 720 current polling places are in schools, using the schools when they are open rather during Spring Break would save approximately \$50,000.

The election administrator in Tom Green County stated that the schools allow the county free access to the buildings, so the county would not experience a fiscal impact from the provisions of the bill, but that the schools would experience a savings if they do not have to be opened on a day otherwise closed. The election administrators in Dallas and Waller counties indicated there would be no fiscal impact for those counties. The election administrator in Denton County stated that Spring Break is not always held at the same time each year and that not all school districts schedule Spring Break at the same time, so the change in date may or may not have an impact. Further, the election administrators indicated that not all polling places are established in school buildings.

The Hidalgo County election administrator estimates that if an election date that was previously held during Spring Break were to occur on a regular school day, the school districts would not allow the use of the school buildings and the county would therefore incur additional costs to rent other polling places.

School administrators from six school districts estimated that there would be no or insignificant fiscal impact for the school districts; however, concern was expressed that if the election were to coincide with standardized testing that is generally scheduled in March, the school district would be less likely to allow the schools to be used as a polling place.

The fiscal impact would vary by county and school district depending on whether an election falls during Spring Break or during a testing period and on how many schools are used as a polling place.

**Source Agencies:** 307 Secretary of State

**LBB Staff:** JK, RR, GO, JF, DLBa