

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 26, 2003

TO: Honorable Will Hartnett, Chair, House Committee on Judicial Affairs

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB3226 by Rose (Relating to the creation of a judicial district composed of Caldwell County.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB3226, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$258,730) through the biennium ending August 31, 2005.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2004	(\$129,365)
2005	(\$129,365)
2006	(\$129,365)
2007	(\$129,365)
2008	(\$129,365)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2003
2004	(\$129,365)	1.0
2005	(\$129,365)	1.0
2006	(\$129,365)	1.0
2007	(\$129,365)	1.0
2008	(\$129,365)	1.0

Fiscal Analysis

Caldwell County is currently served by the 22nd, 207th, and 274th Judicial Districts. The bill would amend Government Code, Chapter 24 to create a new judicial district, the 421st Judicial District, composed of Caldwell County. The bill would take effect September 1, 2003.

Methodology

The salary of a district court judge is currently \$101,700 annually. Associated benefits for the position are estimated to be \$27,665 annually. Together salary and benefits for the district judge of the proposed court would be \$129,365 in fiscal year 2004 and each year thereafter. All other costs would be paid by the county.

According to the county judge for Caldwell County, the three district courts serving Caldwell County currently remit about \$84,500 per year in fees and fines to the state. This amount results from the equivalent of one judge working a 40 percent schedule in Caldwell County. By utilizing the services of a full-time judge in a new district court, the Caldwell County Judge states additional revenue from fees and fines may be generated for both the state and Caldwell County. However, to the extent that additional fines and fees might be collected by the new court, any potential revenue gains are not anticipated to be significant and are not included in this fiscal note.

Local Government Impact

The Caldwell County Auditor provided an estimate of local costs, which would include the salary and benefits of a court coordinator and office expenses, for a total of \$22,685 in fiscal year 2004 and each year thereafter.

To the extent that additional fines and fees might be collected by the new court, any potential revenue gains to the county are not anticipated to be significant and are not included in this fiscal note.

Source Agencies: 212 Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council, 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts

LBB Staff: JK, KG, GO, VDS, TB, DLBa