

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION
Revision 1

April 17, 2003

TO: Honorable John Whitmire, Chair, Senate Committee on Criminal Justice

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB1607 by Ellis, Rodney (Relating to regulation of state crime laboratories.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB1607, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$826,512) 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	(\$429,666)
2005	(\$396,846)
2006	(\$396,846)
2007	(\$396,846)
2008	(\$396,846)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable (Cost) from <i>GENERAL REVENUE FUND</i> 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2003
2004	(\$429,666)	5.0
2005	(\$396,846)	5.0
2006	(\$396,846)	5.0
2007	(\$396,846)	5.0
2008	(\$396,846)	5.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend the Government Code by creating a Forensic Science Review Committee for the purpose of developing standards and program accreditation for all forensic laboratories in the state. The standards would include establishing minimum qualifications for forensic laboratory directors and other personnel as the commission may determine to be necessary and appropriate. The commission would also be responsible for the approval of forensic laboratories for the performance of specific forensic methodologies. The commission would be allowed to require any state agency or political subdivision to provide assistance and data deemed necessary by the commission.

Methodology

The bill would require each scientist, employed to examine evidence in a forensic laboratory, to be

tested for proficiency. Approximately 250 scientists in the state would be subject to the testing program. Costs associated with testing include; test kits at an estimated annual expense of \$50,000 (\$200 x 250 kits) and two FTEs to perform the mandated testing tasks. It is also estimated that three FTEs would be needed to develop, maintain, and update the standard procedures system and for the inspection of each lab annually. Total FTE and related operational costs equal \$346,846 per year. An additional \$32,820 would be required in the first year for travel and technology equipment purchases.

Technology

The technology impact of the bill is related to computer equipment and software packages estimated at \$15,280.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated. However, if the local labs are not in compliance with the guidelines adopted by the committee, there may be costs associated with implementing the recommendations of the committee in their laboratories.

Source Agencies: 405 Department of Public Safety

LBB Staff: JK, WK, VDS, AR