

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

February 28, 2005

TO: Honorable Will Hartnett, Chair, House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Deputy Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB835 by Gattis (Relating to the creation of an additional judicial district in Williamson County.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB835, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$75,634) through the biennium ending August 31, 2007.

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
2006	\$0
2007	(\$75,634)
2008	(\$129,659)
2009	(\$129,659)
2010	(\$129,659)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable (Cost) from <i>GENERAL REVENUE FUND</i> 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2005
2006	\$0	0.0
2007	(\$75,634)	1.0
2008	(\$129,659)	1.0
2009	(\$129,659)	1.0
2010	(\$129,659)	1.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend Chapter 24, Government Code, to create a new judicial district in Williamson County, the 425th Judicial District. The district would be created January 1, 2007 and the bill would take effect September 1, 2006.

Methodology

The annual salary provided by the state for a district judge is \$101,700, plus benefits estimated at \$27,959 annually. Because the court would not be created until January 1, 2007 the fiscal impact for the first year in which the court would exist has been prorated seven months. Thereafter, the estimated annual salary and benefits for the district judge of the proposed court would be \$129,659. The county would pay all other costs.

Local Government Impact

According to information provided by the Williamson County Judge's Office, the one-time set-up costs for the court would be \$44,300. County officials estimate that yearly expenses for the court would total \$497,027, including the salaries and benefits for office staff and expenses of the district court of \$180,000 a year; \$37,511 a year for the district clerk's office; and \$264,216 for the salaries and benefits of two new attorneys, two additional staff members, and an investigator in the district attorney's office. Training and travel expenses also are included for all three offices.

For fiscal 2007, it is assumed that the proposed 425th Judicial District would be in a start-up mode and therefore, there would be no additional revenue initially to offset the cost of the additional judicial district. In the future, however, it is assumed that improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new judicial district could result in higher revenues.

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

LBB Staff: JOB, ZS, TB, DLBa