

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 14, 2005

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

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

IN RE: HB1153 by Gonzales (Relating to the creation of an additional judicial district in Hidalgo County.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB1153, Committee Report 1st House, Substituted: 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 Revenue Gain/(Loss) from GENERAL REVENUE FUND 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 an additional judicial district in Hidalgo County, the 418th Judicial District. The proposed district would be composed of Hidalgo County only, but share jurisdiction with nine other district courts. The court would be created on January 1, 2007 and the effective date of this bill would be 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. The fiscal impact for the first year in which the court would exist has been prorated for seven months (\$75,634). 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

Hidalgo County currently pays an average of \$19,939 annually to supplement each district judge's salary and benefits. In addition, the county would be responsible for the salaries and benefits of court personnel associated with the new court (\$260,318). Operating costs for the 418th court would total \$37,284 in addition to a one-time capital expenditure of \$500,000 to set up the court.

Hidalgo County's fiscal year begins on January 1. The county would incur a cost of \$817,541 for fiscal year 2007, thereafter the cost would be \$317,541 annually. The Hidalgo County Auditor's Office estimated an average of \$270,198 for each of the nine courts in fiscal year 2004. It is assumed that improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new district court could result in higher revenues.

Source Agencies: 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts

LBB Staff: JOB, LB, ZS, ER