

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 27, 2005

TO: Honorable Mary Denny, Chair, House Committee on Elections

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

IN RE: HB1953 by Dutton (Relating to the manner in which certain reports of political contributions and expenditures must be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB1953, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$271,000) through the biennium ending August 31, 2007.
--

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2006	(\$146,000)
2007	(\$125,000)
2008	(\$125,000)
2009	(\$125,000)
2010	(\$125,000)

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	(\$146,000)	5.0
2007	(\$125,000)	5.0
2008	(\$125,000)	5.0
2009	(\$125,000)	5.0
2010	(\$125,000)	5.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill amends the Election Code by adding that a campaign finance report may be sent to the Ethics Commission by facsimile.

Methodology

The Texas Ethics Commission (Commission) reports there would be an impact to their current agency resources. This bill would require the Commission to accept campaign finance reports by facsimile which in turn would require the Commission have the capability to handle the increase in reports filed using this method. Section 254.0401 of the Election Code requires the commission to make each report filed under section 254.036(b) of the Election Code Internet visible not later than the second business day after the report is filed and requires that certain address information be redacted before posting on the Internet.

Depending on the number of filers that elect to file by fax, this statutory deadline may be difficult to meet. The Commission reports that additional staff (5 Administrative Assistant II X \$25,000 = \$125,000) would be needed to prepare reports for posting on the Internet. In order for a report to be posted on the Internet, a faxed report would need to be copied, address information redacted, scanned, and then posted on the Internet. The Commission currently possesses the ability to convert a PDF filed that can be posted on the Internet, but they do not possess the capability to load the data on from a faxed report to the database.

Technology

This bill would require the one-time purchase of two high speed scanners at \$5,000 each, five fax machines at \$200 each, and five computer stations at \$2,000 each.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 356 Texas Ethics Commission

LBB Staff: JOB, LB