

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**April 4, 2005**

**TO:** Honorable Jeff Wentworth, Chair, Senate Committee on Jurisprudence

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

**IN RE: SB324** by Janek (Relating to the creation of a judicial district composed of Brazoria County.), **As Introduced**

**Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds** for SB324, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$248,513) 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	(\$118,854)
2007	(\$129,659)
2008	(\$129,659)
2009	(\$129,659)
2010	(\$129,659)

**All Funds, Five-Year Impact:**

Fiscal Year	Probable Revenue Gain/(Loss) from <i>GENERAL REVENUE FUND</i> 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2005
2006	(\$118,854)	1.0
2007	(\$129,659)	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 Brazoria County, the 412th Judicial District. The district would be created on the effective date of the bill, September 1, 2005.

**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 11 months (\$118,854). 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**

Brazoria County currently pays \$9,300 annually to supplement each district judge's salary and \$1,987 in benefits and payroll taxes. Additionally, Brazoria County would be responsible for paying the salary, benefits, and payroll taxes for 1 chief coordinator (\$56,541), 1 court reporter (\$70,246), 2 district attorneys (\$142,314), 1 district attorney support staff (\$37,778), and 2 district court support staff (\$62,027). According to the Brazoria County Auditor, there would be a one-time capital expenditure of \$40,000 for courtroom renovations and \$12,500 for furniture, in addition to the estimated annual operating cost of \$58,000.

Because Brazoria County's fiscal year begins on October 1, the county would incur a cost of \$89,016 for fiscal year 2005, thereafter the cost would be \$438,193 annually. The Brazoria County Auditor estimates the annual revenue of established district courts to be \$80,000 each. It is assumed that improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new district court could result in higher revenues; however, the amount of increased revenues cannot be estimated.

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

**LBB Staff:** JOB, LB, ZS, ER