

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

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

**May 12, 2005**

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

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

**IN RE: SB729** by Wentworth (Relating to a weighted caseload study of the district courts.), **As Engrossed**

**No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.**

The bill would create an Act relating to a weighted caseload study of the district courts. The bill would require the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to contract with an independent nonprofit organization to conduct a study of the nature and complexity of district court caseloads for the purpose of analyzing the need for new district courts. The bill would require OCA to file a report on study results no later than October 1, 2006 to the governor and certain members of the legislature.

OCA reports that the independent nonprofit organization qualified to conduct the study would be the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). According to OCA, NCSC estimates a contract for a weighted caseload study of Texas district courts would cost \$290,000. Other than the cost of the contract, OCA indicates there would be no additional costs to OCA for implementation of the bill. Because the estimated cost of the contract (\$290,000) is less than 3 percent of general revenue appropriations to the Office of Court Administration in the 2004-05 biennium, this estimate assumes the bill would not have a significant fiscal implication to OCA or the State.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2005.

**Local Government Impact**

To the extent that district court staff would assist NCSC in compiling information for the study, no significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 212 Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council

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