

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 6, 2005

TO: Honorable Mike Jackson, Chair, Senate Committee on S/C on Agriculture & Coastal Resources

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

IN RE: SB1273 by Jackson, Mike (Relating to the establishment of the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program.), **As Introduced**

No fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would establish a Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Council within the Real Estate Research Center at Texas A&M University to provide financial incentives for the conservation of natural resources on working farms and ranches through the use of purchased or donated agricultural conservation easements. The bill would create the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Fund, an account of the Real Estate Research Center dedicated to funding the purchase of agricultural conservation easements through grants to qualified easement holders. The account will consist of public or private grants, gifts, donations or contributions, or funds from any other source including but not limited to proceeds from the sale of bonds, state or federal mitigation funds or funds from any local, state or federal program. The amount of grants made by the Council will depend on the amount of funds deposited into the account.

Note: This legislation would do one or more of the following: create or recreate a dedicated account in the General Revenue Fund, create or recreate a special or trust fund either with or outside of the Treasury, or create a dedicated revenue source. Legislative policy, implemented as Government Code 403.094, consolidated special funds (except those affected by constitutional, federal, or other restrictions) into the General Revenue Fund as of August 31, 1993 and eliminated all applicable statutory revenue dedications as of August 31, 1995. Each subsequent Legislature has reviewed bills that affect funds consolidation. The fund, account, or revenue dedication included in this bill would be subject to funds consolidation review by the current Legislature.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 551 Department of Agriculture, 582 Commission on Environmental Quality, 802 Parks and Wildlife Department

LBB Staff: JOB, WK, RT, SSh