

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 20, 2007

TO: Honorable Harold V. Dutton, Jr., Chair, House Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Issues

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

IN RE: HB876 by King, Tracy (Relating to the confidentiality of certain identification information of a child in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would provide that information specifically identifying a child in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship, including the child's social security number, contained in an order, petition, motion, report, or other document, is confidential and does not constitute public information. In addition, the bill would require that a court, the Title IV-D agency, or any other person that maintains a document containing information that is confidential under this section shall ensure that the information is excluded from disclosure. It is assumed that any additional costs associated with implementation of the bill could be absorbed within existing state resources. The bill would take effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house; otherwise, the bill would take effect September 1, 2007.

Local Government Impact

The Travis County District Clerk reported that implementing the provisions of the bill would require twelve new staff at a total cost of \$623,212 in fiscal year 2008. This number would fall to \$449,990 in fiscal year 2012 as the number of stored documents needing redacting decreases. The new staff would be used mostly to redact information (paper documents, microfilm, computer databases and electronic images) and validate requesters' entitlement to stored records.

Harris County reported initial costs of approximately \$1.1 million in fiscal year 2008, mostly for 32 new personnel. The number of employees would increase to 36 by 2012, requiring expenditures of \$1.3 million. The employees would be used to redact files, check credentials, and assist in reducing customer wait times. The county is considering an electronic system that could be employed for an estimated one-time cost of \$8 million to \$19 million that could reduce the number of staff required.

Tom Green County reported initial costs of \$620,000 in fiscal year 2008 to hire four new personnel, purchase equipment to redact information, and to convert microfiche to images for redaction (this conversion process would cost \$500,000). Costs in fiscal years 2009 to 2012 would be for personnel costs and would range from \$110,000 to \$150,000.

The Tarrant County District Clerk reported revenue losses of approximately \$20,000 per month from its dial-in service. Subscribers pay a fee to access county documents on the Internet; the system may have to be discontinued or modified for an unknown cost if the county has to search through and redact all the documents. Dallas and Bexar counties reported that implementing the provisions of the bill would have no fiscal impact on their budgets.

Source Agencies: 302 Office of the Attorney General

LBB Staff: JOB, MN, JM, KJG