

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 14, 2007

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

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

IN RE: HB1554 by Chavez (Relating to the creation of an additional judicial district in El Paso County.), **As Engrossed**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB1554, As Engrossed: a negative impact of (\$195,448) through the biennium ending August 31, 2009.

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
2008	(\$93,475)
2009	(\$101,973)
2010	(\$101,973)
2011	(\$101,973)
2012	(\$101,973)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Revenue Gain/ (Loss) from GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1	Probable Revenue Gain/ (Loss) from JUDICIAL FUND 573	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2007
2008	(\$93,475)	(\$51,563)	1.0
2009	(\$101,973)	(\$56,250)	1.0
2010	(\$101,973)	(\$56,250)	1.0
2011	(\$101,973)	(\$56,250)	1.0
2012	(\$101,973)	(\$56,250)	1.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend Chapter 24, Government Code, to create a new judicial district in El Paso County, the 448th Judicial District. The court would be created on the effective date of the bill, September 1, 2007.

Methodology

The annual salary provided by the state for a district judge is \$125,000, in addition to benefits (state contributions for group insurance and to the Judicial Retirement System) which are estimated to be \$33,223 annually. The total annual salary and benefits cost for a district judge is estimated to be \$158,223. Because the court would be created on September 1, 2007, the fiscal impact for the first year of court operations is prorated to reflect 11 rather than a full 12 months of operations. The county would pay all other costs.

Local Government Impact

El Paso County's fiscal year begins October 1. El Paso County officials provided an estimate of local costs, which would include the following: operating expenses; equipment purchases; salaries and benefits for a bailiff, a certified court reporter, a court coordinator, two attorneys, and a court clerk; and a salary supplement for the district judge. The total cost to El Paso County for fiscal year 2008 is estimated to be \$447,378 and \$457,410 for fiscal year 2009. Beginning with fiscal year 2009, El Paso County officials estimate a 3 percent salary increase

Because the new 448th Judicial District would be in start-up mode, no additional revenue above amounts generated by the other fifteen district courts in El Paso County is projected for fiscal year 2008. It is assumed that improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new judicial district could result in higher revenues. However, the amount of increased revenues cannot be determined.

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

LBB Staff: JOB, MN, ZS, KJG, JP