

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

**FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**February 27, 2007**

**TO:** Honorable Rick Hardcastle, Chair, House Committee on Energy Resources

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

**IN RE: HB2061** by Keffer, Jim (Relating to the disclosure of social security numbers under the public information law.), **As Introduced**

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

The bill would repeal Section 552.147, Government Code. The bill would take effect immediately if it receives two-thirds approval in both houses; otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

Section 552.147 provides that the social security number of a living person is excepted from the requirements of the public information act. The section also authorizes a local governmental body to redact the social security number of a living person from information subject to disclosure without having to request a decision from the attorney general. Therefore, if the section is repealed, the social security number of a living person would no longer be excepted from public information requirements and would not have to be redacted, and a governmental body would no longer be authorized to redact social security numbers of living persons from documents without first seeking an opinion from the Office of Attorney General.

A governmental entity would experience a savings related to the time and in some cases, computer programming, involved in redacting social security numbers from documents. The savings would vary by governmental entity depending on how many records the entity maintains that include social security numbers.

Although implementation of the provisions of the bill would change how the Office of Attorney General (OAG) analyzes social security numbers, the agency estimates it will not significantly change the number of requests for rulings the office receives. Therefore, the OAG anticipates that any additional work as a result of the passage of the bill could be reasonably absorbed with current resources.

**Local Government Impact**

County clerks' offices, while not the only local government offices that maintain records to which the public information act applies, are responsible for a high volume of documents filed with local governments. A sample of county clerks' offices were contacted regarding the provisions of the bill. Depending on current practices, there would be either no fiscal impact or a savings. In some counties, the savings would be significant. For example, Harris County estimates a savings by the county clerk's office alone of at least \$17 million; Fort Bend County estimates a savings of \$1 million; and Williamson County estimates a savings of \$720,000.

**Source Agencies:** 212 Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council, 302 Office of the Attorney General

**LBB Staff:** JOB, WK, SD, DB