

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 18, 2007

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

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

IN RE: HB2486 by Farabee (Relating to the creation of an additional judicial district in Wichita County.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB2486, As Introduced: 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 <i>GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1</i>	Probable Revenue Gain/ (Loss) from <i>JUDICIAL FUND 573</i>	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 Wichita County, the 457th Judicial District. The district would be created September 1, 2007 and the bill would take effect 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

According to the Wichita County auditor, the county would be responsible for supplementing the judge's salary at \$6,000 annually; paying the salary and benefits of a secretary and court reporter for a total of \$120,000 in fiscal 2008, with an 8-percent increase per year for both of these positions for fiscal 2009 through 2012; and funding annual operating costs of \$11,000.

In fiscal 2008, there would be one time start-up costs of \$500,000 for constructing and equipping a new courtroom.

Wichita County's fiscal year begins January 1. For fiscal 2008, it is assumed that the proposed 457th Judicial District would be in a start-up mode and would generate no additional revenue to offset the cost of the additional judicial district. In the future, however, it is assumed that improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new judicial district could result in higher revenue. However, the amount of increased revenues cannot be estimated.

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

LBB Staff: JOB, MN, ZS, JP