

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 23, 2007

TO: Honorable Judith Zaffirini, Chair, Senate Committee on S/C on Higher Education

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

IN RE: SB517 by Janek (Relating to tuition and laboratory fee exemptions at public institutions of higher education for certain police officers enrolled in criminal justice or law enforcement management-related coursework.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

Under provisions of the bill, a student, who is employed as a police officer by a political subdivision of this state and who enrolls in a course or courses offered as part of a criminal justice or law enforcement management-related curriculum designed for police officers, is exempt from the payment of tuition and fees. Currently, firefighters can also claim the exemption if they are employed by a political subdivision and enroll in courses offered as part of a fire science curriculum.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board indicates that in fiscal year 2005, a total of 1,584 firefighters used this exemption. The agency estimates that the addition of peace officers enrolled in criminal justice or law enforcement management-related curricula will cause the number of persons using the exemption to increase by 25 percent in fiscal year 2008, and an additional 10% in fiscal year 2009 through fiscal year 2012. They also estimate that a third of these persons would have enrolled without the exemption, but that the other two thirds represent additional enrollments. In fiscal year 2005, the 1,584 individuals received exemptions totaling \$659,088. The Coordinating Board estimates this is equal to 382 Full-time Student Equivalents (FTSE). Based on the projected increases mentioned above in participation and enrollments, they estimate the number of participants will grow by 96 FTSE in fiscal year 2008 to 249 FTSE in fiscal year 2012. The tuition losses to the schools are estimated to equal \$164,381 in fiscal year 2008, \$230,133 in fiscal year 2009, \$295,885 in fiscal year 2010, \$361,638 in fiscal year 2011, and \$427,390 in fiscal year 2012. It is assumed that the cost will be absorbed by the institutions of higher education since the bill does not require the State to reimburse the institutions.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 720 The University of Texas System Administration, 769 University of North Texas System Administration, 781 Higher Education Coordinating Board

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