

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 23, 2007

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

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

IN RE: SB2018 by Deuell (Relating to the creation of an additional statutory county court in Hunt County and the administration, operation, and jurisdiction of statutory county courts in that county.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB2018, As Introduced: an impact of \$0 through the biennium ending August 31, 2009.
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General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2008	\$0
2009	\$0
2010	\$0
2011	\$0
2012	\$0

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from <i>JUDICIAL FUND</i> 573
2008	(\$35,000)
2009	(\$35,000)
2010	(\$35,000)
2011	(\$35,000)
2012	(\$35,000)

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend Chapter 25 of the Government Code to create an additional statutory county court at law in Hunt County and amend provisions relating to the administration, operation and jurisdiction of statutory county courts in the county. County Court at Law Number Two of Hunt County would be created on September 1, 2007.

Methodology

In accordance with Section 25.0015, Government Code, the state would be responsible for paying \$35,000 in annual supplemental salary for the judge of the statutory county court at law.

Local Government Impact

The Comptroller's Office contacted the Hunt County Auditor and the Hunt County District Clerk regarding budget data for the existing statutory county court at law to be used as an estimate of the costs for the additional statutory county court at law. The district clerk's office stated it would need to hire two additional employees: one court personnel and one office assistant. The annual fiscal impact to the county is estimated to be \$568,306 for salaries and benefits, operating costs, expert witnesses, supplies, and miscellaneous items such as training and food and drinks for the jury. In addition to these expenses, the Hunt County Judge estimated that there would be a one-time start-up cost of \$250,000 for facility renovations and equipment, and \$100,000 for a metal detector for security purposes.

Hunt County's fiscal year begins October 1. For fiscal 2008, it is assumed that the proposed statutory county court at law would be in start-up mode and would generate no additional revenue to offset the cost of the additional county court at law. In the future, it is assumed that the improved caseload management brought about by the creation of a new statutory county court at law could result in higher revenues; 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, DB