

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

**FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**  
**Revision 1**

**March 14, 2013**

**TO:** Honorable Tryon D. Lewis, Chair, House Committee On Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence

**FROM:** Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB922** by Guillen (Relating to the creation of a county court at law in Atascosa County.),  
**As Introduced**

**Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds** for HB922, As Introduced: an impact of \$0 through the biennium ending August 31, 2015.

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:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</b>
2014	\$0
2015	\$0
2016	\$0
2017	\$0
2018	\$0

**All Funds, Five-Year Impact:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Probable Savings/(Cost) from <i>Judicial Fund</i> 573</b>	<b>Probable Revenue Gain from <i>Judicial Fund</i> 573</b>
2014	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
2015	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
2016	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
2017	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
2018	(\$75,000)	\$75,000

**Fiscal Analysis**

The bill would amend the Government Code to create a new County Court at Law in Atascosa County. The court would be created January 1, 2014, or an earlier date determined by a vote of the Commissioners Court of Atascosa County. The bill would take effect immediately if it receives a

two-thirds vote in each house, otherwise the bill would take effect September 1, 2013.

### **Methodology**

Atascosa County's fiscal year begins January 1. This estimate assumes that the County Court at Law would be created September 1, 2013, because provisions of the bill would allow creation of the Atascosa County Court at Law by a vote of the Commissioners Court of Atascosa County.

The annual recurring cost to the state would be \$75,000 from Judicial Fund No. 573. Under current law, the state provides a county-court-at-law judge a salary supplement in an amount equal to 60 percent of the state salary of a district judge. (Sixty percent of \$125,000 is \$75,000).

Also, the salary supplement program for county-court-at-law judges is funded from fees and court costs collected by county courts at law statewide and deposited into Judicial Fund No. 573. This estimate assumes that the County Court at Law in Atascosa County would generate sufficient revenue to Judicial Fund No. 573 to cover costs of the salary supplement.

Local governments pay the other operating costs associated with a county court at law.

### **Local Government Impact**

The Atascosa County Auditor's office anticipates one-time expenses of \$10,300 for computers, printers, desks, chairs, and telephones in fiscal year 2013, in addition to \$102,283 for four months pro-rated for court expenses, salary and benefits, totalling \$112,583 for 2013. The total expenses for fiscal years 2014 to 18, including salaries and benefits, would be \$1,670,000.

It is assumed that improved caseload management, through creation of a new county court at law, could result in higher revenue to offset expenses and operating costs, for a net gain of approximately \$800,000 per year for 2014 to 2018, and a net gain of \$236,585 in 2013.

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

**LBB Staff:** UP, CL, ZS, JP, SD, KKR