

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 22, 2013

TO: Honorable Gary Elkins, Chair, House Committee on Technology

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB940 by Canales (Relating to providing for legislative information on the Internet in Spanish.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB940, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$29,623,240) 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:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2014	(\$26,250,000)
2015	(\$3,373,240)
2016	(\$1,686,620)
2017	(\$3,373,240)
2018	(\$1,686,620)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund
	1
2014	(\$26,250,000)
2015	(\$3,373,240)
2016	(\$1,686,620)
2017	(\$3,373,240)
2018	(\$1,686,620)

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend the Government Code to require the Legislative Council (TLC) to make legislative information it provides to the public through the Internet available in English and Spanish.

The bill would take effect January 1, 2014.

Methodology

The table above reflects costs to make legislative information provided by TLC on the Texas Legislature Online (TLO) website available in Spanish as well as English. This would involve the translation of all extant documents and new documents as they become public during a legislative session. This includes, but would not be limited to, proposed legislation, bill analyses, fiscal notes, calendars, meeting notices, and minutes.

TLC estimates that an average legislative document contains 200 words and that 473,000 documents have been made available on TLO since 1993. This equates to approximately 94,600,000 words that would need to be translated under the provisions of the bill. Based on the number of documents made available during the 82nd Legislature (from the first day of bill filing in November 2010 through the last day of the special session in 2011), TLC anticipates that 52,000 documents consisting of 10,400,000 words would be added to TLO by June 2013. As such, 525,000 documents consisting of 105,000,000 words would need to be translated in fiscal year 2014. Based on information provided by TLC, it is assumed that current staff resources would not be sufficient to translate such a large number of complex legal documents into Spanish.

Translation costs in this analysis are based on a rate of \$0.25 per word. Additionally, it is assumed that expert translators translate complex documents at a rate of 325 words per hour. Costs in fiscal year 2014 assume 81 normal eight hour working days between September 1, 2013 and January 1, 2014 and that TLC would be able to find and retain 499 contract translators that would be able to translate at the expert rate by September 1st. Based on these assumptions, fiscal year 2014 costs to translate the 525,000 documents would be approximately \$26.3 million in General Revenue Funds.

TLC also assumes needing 20 staff positions to hire translators to work every day for 204 days to translate the 52,000 documents projected to be generated each Session for the 84th and 85th Regular Sessions in fiscal years 2015 and 2017. This number of days represents the approximate calendar days from the first day that bills can be filed to the last day of a regular session. TLC estimates costs for salaries and over-time pay would be equitable to the \$0.25 per word rate (\$2.6 million) with benefit costs (\$773,240) in General Revenue for filling these positions in fiscal years 2015 and 2017. TLC also assumes that it would be necessary to retain half of the translation team during each interim to maintain the expertise with complex legislative documents that would be obtained over the initial translation project period and a session. This would equate to salary costs of \$1.3 million and benefit costs of \$386,620 in General Revenue in fiscal years 2016 and 2018.

This analysis does not include costs for any Special Sessions nor does it include costs associated with reviewing the translations for accuracy or completeness.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 103 Legislative Council

LBB Staff: UP, RB, MW