

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

February 18, 2013

TO: Honorable Jane Nelson, Chair, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB423 by Nelson (Relating to the flexible response system for investigations of child abuse or neglect reports by the Department of Family and Protective Services.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB423, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$1,542,384) 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	(\$1,542,384)
2015	\$0
2016	\$0
2017	\$0
2018	\$0

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from <i>General Revenue Fund</i> 1	Probable Savings/(Cost) from <i>GR Match For Medicaid</i> 758	Probable Savings/(Cost) from <i>Federal Funds</i> 555
2014	(\$1,518,720)	(\$23,664)	(\$189,970)
2015	\$0	\$0	\$0
2016	\$0	\$0	\$0
2017	\$0	\$0	\$0
2018	\$0	\$0	\$0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend the Family Code as it relates to the flexible response system for investigations of child abuse or neglect by the Department of Family and Protective Services

(DFPS).

Under current law, DFPS is required to have a flexible response system to allow the agency to make the most effective use of resources by investigating serious cases of abuse and neglect and screening out less serious cases of abuse and neglect, if the agency determines that the child's safety can be assured without further investigation. The provisions of the bill would expand this authority by allowing the agency to conduct an alternative response to certain reports of abuse or neglect as long as the alternative response meets certain criteria. The alternative response would be implemented in one or more regions before being implemented statewide.

If a child's safety could be assured without investigation, response, service, or assistance, the agency would also be authorized to administratively close a report of abuse or neglect without completing an investigation or alternative response.

The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission would be required to adopt rules necessary to implement the alternative response to certain reports of abuse or neglect not later than December 1, 2013.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2013.

Methodology

According to DFPS, implementing the provisions of the bill would require substantive changes to the Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas (IMPACT) system, which is the agency's automated casework system, in order to create an additional stage of service for the alternative investigation track.

The agency's estimated costs for these system changes is \$1,732,354 (16,526 hours of development X \$104.83 per hour) in All Funds, including \$1,542,384 in General Revenue Funds in fiscal year 2014. The agency has requested exceptional item funding for the 2014-15 biennium for this project.

Technology

DFPS indicates that substantive changes to the IMPACT system, at a cost of \$1,732,354 in All Funds, would be required. These costs are included above.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 530 Family and Protective Services, Department of

LBB Staff: UP, CL, MB, SJ, SD, VJC