

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 83RD LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 19, 2013

TO: Honorable John Whitmire, Chair, Senate Committee On Criminal Justice

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB1185 by Huffman (Relating to the creation of a mental health jail diversion pilot program.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Health and Safety Code as it relates to the creation of a mental health jail diversion pilot program. Under the provisions of the bill, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) shall establish and operate a pilot program in Harris County for the purpose of reducing jail recidivism among persons with mental illness in the community. The bill states that the creation of the pilot program is contingent upon the contribution of \$32,650,000 per year from the Harris County Commissioners Court. It is assumed that the contribution from the Harris County Commissioners Court would fund the pilot program directly and the contribution would not be provided directly to DSHS. DSHS would be required to design and test through the pilot program a new criminal justice mental health service model and is required to seek input and coordinate with local entities regarding the pilot program. The bill would require DSHS to submit a report to the legislature by December 1, 2016. The pilot program expires on September 1, 2017. The bill would take effect immediately if a two-thirds majority vote in both houses of the Legislature is received. Otherwise, the bill would take effect on September 1, 2013. It is assumed that the provisions of the bill can be implemented within existing resources.

Local Government Impact

The bill would require Harris County to pay \$32,650,000 annually to fund the program.

Harris County estimates some savings associated with treating people through the program who would otherwise be in county jails. Assuming savings of \$125 per day for the program rather than jail, an average jail stay of 30 days, and 500 to 600 inmates treated per year, Houston County anticipates savings of \$1,875,000 to \$2,250,000 annually.

Source Agencies: 537 State Health Services, Department of

LBB Staff: UP, ESi, CH, NB, KKR