

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 15, 2015

TO: Honorable Gary Elkins, Chair, House Committee on Government Transparency & Operation

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: **HB283** by Fallon (Relating to the requirement that certain governmental bodies make audio and video recordings of open meetings available on the Internet.), **As Introduced**

No fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Government Code to require certain governmental bodies with a population of 50,000 or more to make a video and audio recording of reasonable quality of each regularly scheduled open meeting that is not a work session or a special called meeting. The bill would require an archived copy of video and audio to be made available on an existing Internet site. The bill would also establish exemptions due to a catastrophe or technical breakdown. The bill would permit a governmental body to broadcast a regularly scheduled open meeting on television.

Local Government Impact

TEA interpreted the bill's provisions to apply to a school district that had a population of 50,000 or more within its geographic boundaries. Based on 2010 U.S. Census data, there are over 100 school districts that would be affected. If the bill was interpreted to refer to school districts located within a municipality or county with a population of 50,000 or greater, then more than 450 school districts and over 190 charter schools would be impacted. If the bill was interpreted to refer to school districts with a student enrollment of 50,000 or greater, then 18 districts would be required to comply with the provisions of the bill.

Applicable school districts would be required to provide archived broadcasts of board of trustee meetings using an Internet website. The TEA indicated that school districts would incur administrative costs to either purchase equipment or pay for services to record video and audio of open meetings. At a minimum, the location of the open meeting would require a video camera and a computer with video and audio cards. There would be labor costs to operate the camera. Costs could range anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars depending on the number of meetings, the amount and quality of equipment, and whether the equipment was purchased, leased, or part of a services contract that covered the cost of labor to archive the video and audio of open meetings to be made available over the Internet.

There could be a fiscal impact to applicable cities and counties that would vary depending on current processes in a locality.

The City of Conroe reported there would be costs for new equipment and SWAGIT annual fees totaling an estimated \$15,739 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016; and ongoing annual fees of \$7,800 in FY 2017-2020.

Dallas County reported the county's meetings are already available online and the bill would have no fiscal impact on the county.

Montgomery County reported there would be costs for hardware, a workstation, and monthly fees for streaming totaling an estimated \$45,832 for FY 2016; and ongoing monthly fees of \$18,645-\$24,816 in FY 2017-2020.

Source Agencies: 701 Central Education Agency

LBB Staff: UP, FR, SD, EK, JBi