

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 7, 2015

TO: Honorable Susan Lewis King, Chair, House Committee on Defense & Veterans' Affairs

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1048 by Farias (Relating to the administration of and eligibility for participation in veterans court programs; changing a fee.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Government Code to expand eligibility for participation in veterans court programs by eliminating the requirement that the state's attorney consent to the defendant's participation in the program. The bill would also expand program eligibility to defendants who had suffered sexual trauma during military service and would remove eligibility requirements that a veteran's injury, illness, or disorder resulted from service in a combat zone or other hazardous area. Finally, the bill would provide the court more discretion to order participation in a veterans court program and would reduce the fee for participation from not to exceed from \$1,000 to \$500.

Based on the analysis of the Office of Court Administration and the Veterans Commission, duties and responsibilities associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be accomplished by utilizing existing resources.

Local Government Impact

The bill would expand the availability for participation in a veterans court program and would reduce the fee for participation from not to exceed \$1,000 to not to exceed \$500. There may be a revenue loss to local governments; however, the fiscal impact would vary depending on the number of participants in the program.

According to Harris County, reducing program fees may result in a reduction of treatment, support, and/or supervision within the program.

Travis County reported that there would be no fiscal impact to the county because the program does not currently assess a fee.

Source Agencies: 212 Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council, 403 Veterans Commission

LBB Staff: UP, FR, GDz, KVe