

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**March 29, 2015**

**TO:** Honorable Joan Huffman, Chair, Senate Committee on State Affairs

**FROM:** Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: SB19** by Taylor, Van (Relating to the ethics of public officers and related requirements; creating criminal offenses.), **As Introduced**

**No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.**

The bill would amend Government Code to suspend or reduce benefits of elected public officials who commit an offense related to their public service. The bill would also increase transparency and disclosure requirements for state officers and would prohibit former legislators from paid lobbying for the first two years after leaving office. The Ethics Commission indicates that any costs associated with the bill could be absorbed within existing resources.

The Employees Retirement System (ERS) indicates that although the retirement fund would lose the liability of having to pay these members' future annuities, creating some savings to the fund, the bill is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the fund due to the relatively small number of individuals assumed to be affected. The bill would require ERS to resume payment of annuity if the conviction is overturned. ERS anticipates that any additional administrative costs associated with implementing the legislation could be absorbed within existing resources. The bill would create offenses associated with former members of the legislature and executive elected officers.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015 and would apply only to those elected members that are convicted of an offense related to their public service on or after this date. The increased disclosure requirements would take effect on or after January 1, 2017.

**Local Government Impact**

A Class A misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of not more than \$4,000, confinement in jail for a term not to exceed one year, or both. A Class B misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of not more than \$2,000, confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, or both. Costs associated with enforcement, prosecution and confinement could likely be absorbed within existing resources. Revenue gain from fines imposed and collected is not anticipated to be significant.

**Source Agencies:** 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 327 Employees Retirement System, 356 Texas Ethics Commission, 701 Central Education Agency

**LBB Staff:** UP, AG, EP, EMO, EK, AW