

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

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

**April 8, 2015**

**TO:** Honorable Charles Schwertner, Chair, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

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

**IN RE:** **SB949** by Uresti (relating to the release of certain child fatality and near-fatality information for abused or neglected children.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

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

The bill would amend the Family Code to require the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to release all investigation information not prohibited from release under federal law, for child fatalities or near fatalities caused by abuse or neglect. The bill would also require DFPS to publish an annual report on child fatality investigations for which DFPS made a finding regarding abuse or neglect, including cases in which the department determined the fatality was not the result of abuse or neglect. The report must include certain information and protect the identity of individuals involved. The bill would also require DFPS to post the annual report on the department's Internet website and otherwise make the report available to the public. The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is authorized to adopt rules for the annual child fatality report. The bill would only apply to requests for information related to child fatalities or near fatalities submitted after September 1, 2015. The annual child fatality report must be published on the DFPS website by March 1, 2016.

DFPS indicates they would be able to implement the bill within existing resources. DFPS assumes that they would be able to handle the increase in redactor requests with existing staff. DFPS indicates that required child protective services data will be tracked through manual data entry. The only system change required to support this function would be to add text fields to IMPACT, which the agency anticipates can be accomplished with internal DFPS staff.

**Local Government Impact**

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 530 Family and Protective Services, Department of

**LBB Staff:** UP, NB, WP