

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 27, 2015

TO: Honorable Dan Patrick, Lieutenant Governor, Senate

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: **SB1369** by Zaffirini (Relating to reports on attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, guardian, mediator, and competency evaluator appointments made by courts in this state and an interim study on a billing system for attorneys ad litem.), **As Passed 2nd House**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Government Code, requiring courts to publish information, as described, about court appointments, including individuals appointed as attorneys ad litem, guardians ad litem, guardians appointed under the Estate Code, mediators, and competency evaluators. Some types of appointments would be exempt from reporting requirements.

By the 15th of each month, the clerk of each court would be required to submit a report with certain information, as described to the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The clerk would also be required to post the report at the courthouse and on any court website. A court failing to provide information to the clerk to be included in the report would be ineligible for grant money awarded by the state or a state agency. OCA would be required to prescribe the format for reporting the information and the Judicial Council would be required to adopt rules to implement the bill. OCA would also be required to conduct a study on various issues relating to ad litem appointments, as described. OCA would be required to submit the report to the governor and legislative leadership by December 31, 2016.

OCA indicates that the agency can implement bill provisions within existing resources. Further, no significant fiscal implication to the court system is anticipated because courts clerks are already required by Supreme Court rule to provide reports on payments made of \$500 or more on a monthly basis.

Local Government Impact

The Office of Court Administration indicates that because court clerks are already required by Supreme Court rule to provide reports on payments made of \$500 or more on a monthly basis, no significant fiscal impact to the local court system is anticipated.

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

LBB Staff: UP, TB, FR, AG