

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 85TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 1, 2017

TO: Honorable René Oliveira, Chair, House Committee on Business & Industry

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB2119 by Kacal (Relating to workers' compensation death benefit eligibility for certain spouses of first responders killed in the line of duty.), **As Introduced**

Dependent upon the number of surviving spouses of first responders made eligible under the bill for workers' compensation death benefits, there would be an indeterminate cost to the State.

The bill would amend the Labor Code to allow surviving spouses of first responders who are currently ineligible to receive workers' compensation death benefit payments due to remarriage to begin receiving death benefits again, regardless of the date of the death of the first responder or the date of remarriage. Surviving spouses made eligible again by the bill would be entitled only to benefits accrued on or after September 1, 2017.

The Department of Insurance, Comptroller of Public Accounts, State Office of Risk Management, the Texas A&M University System, and the University of Texas System do not have sufficient information to estimate a fiscal impact at this time, although the agencies assume there could be an indeterminate cost to the state of the additional benefits paid under the bill.

To estimate the fiscal impact to affected agencies, each agency paying related claims would need to estimate the total number of surviving spouses of first responders who are no longer receiving workers' compensation death benefits and would be eligible to receive benefits again under the bill. Due to unavailability of data on these historical beneficiaries, the Department of Insurance, Comptroller of Public Accounts, State Office of Risk Management, the Texas A&M University System, and the University of Texas System cannot determine the number of potentially impacted individuals.

The Department of Insurance, Comptroller of Public Accounts, State Office of Risk Management, the Texas A&M University System, and the University of Texas System assume any additional administrative work associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be absorbed using existing resources.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2017.

Local Government Impact

The fiscal impact to local government cannot be determined at this time.

Source Agencies: 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 454 Department of Insurance, 479 State Office of Risk Management, 601 Department of Transportation, 710 Texas A&M University System Administrative and General Offices, 720 The University of Texas System Administration

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