

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 85TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 27, 2017

TO: Honorable Kel Seliger, Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB247 by Zaffirini (Relating to funding sources for the repayment of certain speech-language pathologist and audiologist education loans.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated for the 2018-19 biennium.

However, if fee revenue that is currently deposited into General Revenue is used to fund the program, there would be an indeterminate revenue loss to the state beginning in the 2020-21 biennium.

The bill would amend Education Code and the Occupations Code as it relates to funding sources for the repayment of certain language pathologist and audiologist education loans. Under current law, the program to support the repayment of certain speech-language pathologist and audiologist education loans is exclusively funded by gifts, grants, and donations. Under provisions of the bill, a new funding source for the program, fees collected to cover the costs of administering programs or activities for speech language pathologists and audiologists, in excess of the money required to pay the expenses for administration of those programs or activities, could be used to support the program. The bill would require the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (Commission) to consult with the Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Advisory Board to establish a rule that a portion of fees collected from speech-language pathologist and audiologist license issuances and renewals can be allocated to the loan repayment programs. Under provisions of the bill, a rule adopted by the Commission could not take effect earlier than the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2019.

Effective September 1, 2016, the fees for speech pathologists and audiologists are being collected by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). Prior to this date, the Department of State Health Services collected these fees. Historically, revenue collected from these fees has exceeded costs associated with administering the program. Currently these excess funds are deposited in the General Revenue Fund.

Under provisions of the bill, the earliest the fees could be used to support the loan repayment program is fiscal year 2020, therefore there would be no impact to the State in the 2018-19 biennium. Based on information provided by TDLR and the Comptroller's Office, the fiscal impact beginning in fiscal year 2020 cannot be determined. If fees were used to support the program, there could be a revenue loss to the General Revenue Fund.

Local Government Impact

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

Source Agencies: 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 452 Department of Licensing and Regulation, 710 Texas A&M University System Administrative and General Offices, 720 The University of Texas System Administration, 758 Texas State University System, 768 Texas Tech University System Administration, 781 Higher Education Coordinating Board, 783 University of Houston System Administration, 769 University of North Texas System Administration

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