

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

**FISCAL NOTE, 86TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**April 15, 2019**

**TO:** Honorable James B. Frank, Chair, House Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** John McGeady, Assistant Director    Sarah Keyton, Assistant Director  
Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB1564** by Hinojosa (Relating to the provision of certain support services to persons who are deaf-blind.), **As Introduced**

**Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds** for HB1564, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$12,052,570) through the biennium ending August 31, 2021.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

**General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</b>
2020	(\$6,033,117)
2021	(\$6,019,453)
2022	(\$6,022,453)
2023	(\$6,028,453)
2024	(\$6,028,453)

**All Funds, Five-Year Impact:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Probable (Cost) from General Revenue Fund 1</b>	<b>Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2019</b>
2020	(\$6,033,117)	3.0
2021	(\$6,019,453)	3.0
2022	(\$6,022,453)	3.0
2023	(\$6,028,453)	3.0
2024	(\$6,028,453)	3.0

## **Fiscal Analysis**

The bill would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish a statewide deaf-blind support services program delivered by trained providers, who are reimbursed by the agency for the services. The services would include providing visual and environmental information or sighted guide services and assisting with communication accessibility.

The bill would direct the executive commissioner to establish reimbursement rates to be paid to providers of deaf-blind support services under the program. The bill would direct a tiered wage scale based on the providers' level of training and fluency in communications for those who are deaf-blind.

The bill would require HHSC to monitor compliance of the program, develop funding sources for the program to reduce reliance on state sources, and provide funding and technical assistance for training programs. The bill would authorize HHSC to establish an advisory committee for the development and operation of the program.

## **Methodology**

The agency would require 3.0 additional FTEs to implement the provisions of the bill to secure funding sources, establish program specifications, and provide technical assistance. If the agency were to establish an advisory committee, it is estimated that additional staff time would be required to manage and coordinate activities. The bill would also require the agency to provide trainings and monitor the performance of service providers. According to HHSC, the estimated total All Funds net cost for the program and support, including salaries, overhead costs, travel, and basic consumable supplies, technology costs, and benefits, is estimated to be \$434,947 in fiscal year 2020, and \$416,283 in fiscal year 2021.

The bill would require the agency to establish reimbursement rates to support the program for an unknown number of clients. HHSC estimated the total All Funds cost for client services as \$5,598,170 in fiscal year 2020 and \$5,603,170 in fiscal year 2021.

In order to estimate the cost of client services, the agency assumed: (1) Ten percent of those needing services would be at the Tier 1 level, 20.0 percent at the Tier 2 level, 60.0 percent at the Tier 3 level, and ten percent at the Tier 4 level; (2) On average a Support Service Provider (SSP) would drive about 50 miles a month for every 15 hours of services a month per person; (3) Persons at the Tier 3 and 4 levels would need the full service level, whereas a person at the Tier 2 level would need 50.0 percent, and a person at the Tier 1 level would need 34.0 percent; (4) Based on previous findings for SSP services, participants received on average 15 hours of service a month. Consequently, the estimate for client services was established on a formula that could be modified by the number of people served and the number of hours of service.

## **Technology**

FTE-related technology costs would include PC and telecommunications services and basic data storage. The total technology net cost is estimated to be \$17,910 in fiscal year 2020 and \$14,901 in fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2024.

## **Local Government Impact**

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 529 Health and Human Services Commission

**LBB Staff:** WP, AKi, JQ, CSt, BH