

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 18, 2021

TO: Honorable Nicole Collier, Chair, House Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB818 by Cole (Relating to the prosecution and punishment of the criminal offense of harassment; creating a criminal offense.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

<p>No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.</p>
--

The bill would amend the Penal Code to expand the criminal offense of harassment to include publishing communications designed to harass, abuse, or torment another on the Internet, unless the communications are made in connection with a matter of public concern. The offense as expanded by the bill would be a Class B misdemeanor, unless the offense is committed against a child with the intent that the child commit suicide or engage in conduct causing serious bodily injury to the child or the person committing the offense has previously violated a temporary restraining order or injunction prohibiting cyberbullying, in which event the offense would be a Class A misdemeanor.

According to the Office of Court Administration, no significant impact to the state court system is anticipated.

Local Government Impact

The Texas Association of Counties does not anticipate a significant fiscal impact to counties.

A Class B misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of not more than \$2,000, confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, or both. A Class A misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of not more than \$4,000, confinement in jail for a term not to exceed one year, or both. Costs associated with enforcement, prosecution and confinement could likely be absorbed within existing resources. Revenue gain from fines imposed and collected is not anticipated to have a significant fiscal implication.

Source Agencies: 212 Office of Court Admin

LBB Staff: JMc, DKN, CMA, ANE