

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

**FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**March 30, 2021**

**TO:** Honorable Jeff Leach, Chair, House Committee on Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence

**FROM:** Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB2656** by Moody (Relating to licensing examinations for certain court interpreters.), **As Introduced**

**Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds** for HB2656, As Introduced : an impact of \$0 through the biennium ending August 31, 2023.

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:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</i>
2022	\$0
2023	\$0
2024	\$0
2025	\$0
2026	\$0

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

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund 1</i>	<i>Probable Revenue Gain/(Loss) from General Revenue Fund 1</i>	<i>Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2021</i>
2022	(\$262,425)	\$262,425	3.0
2023	(\$254,020)	\$254,020	3.0
2024	(\$254,315)	\$254,315	3.0
2025	(\$254,515)	\$254,515	3.0
2026	(\$264,730)	\$264,730	3.0

**Fiscal Analysis**

The bill would amend the Government Code to require the licensing examination for licensed court interpreters to be administered at least once per year in each county which has a population of 800,000 or higher; or be administered twice per year in person at any location and twice per year online. The Government Code currently requires the licensing examination at least twice a year.

The Office of Court Administration (OCA) currently administers the exam four times a year in Austin. OCA currently collects a \$200 application fee for the licensed court interpreter exam. Under the bill's provisions, the agency anticipates administering the exam in 8 additional locations each year.

The bill would take effect January 1, 2022.

### **Methodology**

According to OCA, the examination is provided pursuant to a contract with the only provider of a court interpreter's examination in the country. In accordance with the terms of that contract, there are strict security requirements which preclude administering the examination online. In addition, examinees' verbal interpretations from English to another language and from another language to English must be recorded in a manner that is clear and audible for later grading.

This analysis is based on information provided by the OCA. Costs reflected in the table above assume (1) that online testing would not be used while the contract for the current provider is effective; (2) an additional 3.0 FTEs would be required to travel to 8 counties to administer the exam in 8 additional locations each year; and (3) that space would be available for no cost in local counties to administer the exam. It is also assumed that the additional staff would require notebook computers, speakers, monitors, flash drives, mousepads, licenses, noise cancelling headphones, and other equipment to administer and record the interpreter examinations.

Since OCA's Judicial Branch Certification Commission is required by Government Code Section 151.151 to set fees in amounts reasonable and necessary to cover the costs of administering examinations and issuance and renewal of certifications, registrations, and licenses, this analysis assumes that fees would be increased as necessary to cover the costs of implementing the provisions of the bill.

### **Local Government Impact**

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

**Source Agencies:** 212 Office of Court Admin

**LBB Staff:** JMc, SLE, MW, BH