

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 20, 2021

TO: Honorable Lois W. Kolkhorst, Chair, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB3287 by González, Mary (Relating to the provision of certain co-navigation services to persons who are deaf-blind.), **As Engrossed**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB3287, As Engrossed : a negative impact of (\$1,401,153) 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	(\$428,902)
2023	(\$972,251)
2024	(\$982,779)
2025	(\$995,322)
2026	(\$995,883)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund</i>	<i>Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2021</i>
2022	(\$428,902)	3.0
2023	(\$972,251)	3.0
2024	(\$982,779)	3.0
2025	(\$995,322)	3.0
2026	(\$995,883)	3.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to operate a statewide co-navigation services program no later than September 1, 2022. The executive commissioner of HHSC would be required to establish reimbursement rates to pay under the co-navigator program that meet certain requirements and adopt rules as necessary to operate the program. The executive commissioner of HHSC could also establish an advisory committee to advise HHSC in developing and operating the program.

Methodology

This analysis assumes the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) would adopt rules and hire and train staff and contractors in fiscal year 2022 and the program would start providing client services on September 1, 2022.

According to information provided by HHSC, 1.0 Program Specialist VI full-time equivalent (FTE) would be needed to oversee the program and seek additional funding sources, 1.0 Contract Specialist V FTE would oversee co-navigator contracts, and 1.0 Training Specialist VI FTE would oversee training efforts for co-navigators and persons who are deaf-blind. The total estimated cost in General Revenue to hire 3.0 FTEs would be \$0.4 million in fiscal year 2022 and \$0.3 million in fiscal years 2023 through 2026.

This analysis assumes there would be costs for travel and interpreter services for persons serving on the advisory council. The total estimated cost in General Revenue would be \$14,811 in fiscal year 2022 and \$8,247 in fiscal years 2023 through 2026.

This analysis assumes that four tiers would be established for co-navigator services based on communication modes: Tiers 1 and 2 for persons who do not know sign language; Tier 3 for persons using sign language; and Tier 4 for persons using pro-tactile language.

This analysis estimates there are 2,466 persons who are deaf-blind over the age of 18 in Texas based on information from The Helen Keller National Center, although the total population size may be greater. It is assumed that the total number of persons who are deaf-blind in need of services would be: ten percent of persons at the Tier 1 level; 20 percent of persons at the Tier 2 level; 60 percent of persons at the Tier 3 level; and ten percent of persons at the Tier 4 level. The estimated hourly rates to provide services would be \$20.59 for Tier 1; \$22.78 for Tier 2; \$24.96 for Tier 3; and \$27.15 for Tier 4. It is further assumed that persons would utilize a certain number of maximum hours: 34 percent of maximum hours in Tier 1; 50 percent of maximum hours in Tier 2; and 100 percent of maximum hours in Tiers 3 and 4. The total estimated cost in General Revenue to provide client services would be \$0.6 million in fiscal years 2023 through 2026. The impact to General Revenue may be offset by identifying additional funding sources.

Technology

The total technology cost related to the additional FTEs is assumed to be \$14,811 in fiscal year 2022, and \$8,247 in fiscal years 2023 through 2026.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 529 Hlth & Human Svcs Comm

LBB Staff: JMc, AKI, JLI