

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 12, 2021

TO: Honorable Paul Bettencourt, Chair, Senate Committee on Local Government

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB10 by Bettencourt (Relating to the use by a county or municipality of public money for lobbying activities.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

It is assumed that the provisions of the bill relating to the use by a county or municipality of public money for lobbying activities could be absorbed using existing resources.

Local Government Impact

The City of Houston anticipates a significant fiscal impact to the city.

The City of San Antonio currently spends approximately \$350,000 on contract lobbyists only during odd-numbered years when the legislature is in session. If they are prohibited from hiring consultants, they would likely significantly increase their in-house staff to monitor and provide information to their elected officials at a cost of at least twice what they currently spend. They anticipate \$1.4 million per biennium. Additionally, the ability for any person to bring a lawsuit and collect attorney's fees and costs could significantly increase the city's litigation expenses. However, it is not possible to calculate the amount at this time.

El Paso County would still need to join other associations for best practice learning and information sharing purposes, but would have to represent themselves individually. The county anticipates the need to hire at least one full time employee in Austin to represent the county before state agencies and legislative members should the bill pass.

The fiscal impact to other units of local government cannot be determined at this time.

Source Agencies: 356 Texas Ethics Commission

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