

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 89TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 21, 2025

TO: Honorable Will Metcalf, Chair, House Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB4230 by Metcalf (relating to the establishment of a hike and bike trail to be known as the Bicentennial Trail.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

The fiscal implications of the bill cannot be determined due to the amount of land that would need to be purchased or leased; the time and cost it would take to purchase or lease the land; the number and cost of necessary engineering plans that would be needed; and the construction costs to establish the Bicentennial Trails being unknown at this time.

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

The bill would amend the Natural Resources Code to require the General Land Office (GLO) to coordinate the establishment of a hike and bike trail to be known as the Bicentennial Trail, by January 1, 2036. The bill would establish the Bicentennial Trail as a network of hike and bike trails to connect the Alamo to the State Capitol and to include hike and bike trail connections to Barton Springs, San Marcos Springs, Comal Springs, and San Antonio Springs for the purposes of promoting outdoor recreation, environmental stewardship, and the historical and cultural heritage of this state.

The bill would require the GLO to adopt rules as necessary and to enter into a memoranda of understanding (MOU) with affected local governments and organizations, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). The bill would authorize the MOU to address the coordination of trail development, trail maintenance, acquisition of interests in real property, conservation efforts along the trail routes, or any other matter pertinent to the establishment or maintenance of the trail. The bill would require that real property acquired by the state for the trail could only be used for the purposes of the Bicentennial Trail and would prohibit the use of eminent domain to acquire real property or interests in real property for the trail. The bill would require TPWD to maintain any real property acquired by the state for the Bicentennial Trail.

Based on information provided by the GLO, the agency would require two additional FTEs, including one Planner IV position (1.0 FTE) and one Project Manager IV position (1.0 FTE), to implement the provisions of the bill with salary, benefit, travel, and operating costs from the General Revenue Fund totaling \$260,917 in fiscal year 2026 and \$255,589 in fiscal year 2027 and each subsequent fiscal year. Included benefit costs would total \$53,671 each fiscal year.

Based on GLO's research of average trail constructions and purchase or lease of land, the agency estimates property acquisition, engineering, and construction costs could exceed \$1,000,000 per mile. The fiscal implications cannot be determined due to the amount of land that would need to be purchased or leased; the time and cost it would take to purchase or lease the land; the number and cost of necessary engineering plans that would be needed; and the construction costs to establish the Bicentennial Trails being unknown at this time.

According to the TPWD, any costs associated with the bill for the agency could be absorbed using existing resources because there is no directive requiring TPWD to acquire land. Based on information provided by the

TPWD, the fiscal impact cannot be determined if acquiring land would be a directive because the costs associated with the size, location, value, and timing of land that would be acquired are unknown.

Based on information provided by the Texas Department of Transportation, it is assumed that costs associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be absorbed within existing resources.

Local Government Impact

The fiscal implications of the bill cannot be determined at this time.

Source Agencies: 305 General Land Office and Veterans' Land Board, 601 Department of Transportation, 802 Parks and Wildlife Department

LBB Staff: JMc, Tuf, MW, JDio