

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 89TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 9, 2025

TO: Honorable Phil King, Chair, Senate Committee on Economic Development

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB5032 by Metcalf (Relating to the display of certain historical state documents.), **As Engrossed**

There would be an indeterminate cost to the state dependent on the specific parameters and type of encasements used to house the three historical documents outlined in the bill.

The bill would require the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to collaborate with the State Preservation Board (SPB) and Texas Historical Commission (THC) to designate a place in the Capitol Complex to display the Texas Constitution and the Texas Declaration of Independence, requiring TSLAC to pay costs attributable to the display. TSLAC, SPB, and THC would collaborate to develop a plan to display the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and publish the plan on TSLAC's website.

The bill would designate TSLAC as responsible for the care and custody of the Victory or Death letter, and require TSLAC to designate a place in the Alamo Complex to display it publicly. Until the appropriate time to transfer the letter to the Alamo complex, the letter would be displayed at the capitol complex with the other two documents. Costs attributable to the display of the letter at either the Capitol Complex or Alamo Complex would be paid with money from the Alamo Complex Account. TSLAC, in consultation with SPB and THC, would be authorized to display all three documents at a historical event or site for a limited period.

According to TSLAC, research conducted with the National Institute of Science and Technology concluded that total costs to display all three documents in a public location could range between \$1,819,245 and \$3,063,350 for fiscal year 2026. This would include three state of the art encasements made with a double layer of tempered glass, sealing the documents in argon gas with precise sensors, a frame machined from a solid metal block, and sealed together with a tin and nickel alloy. Each encasement is estimated to cost between \$473,415 and \$888,117. The encasements would be housed in three formal exhibit cases (approximately \$33,000 per case), and installed at the determined location (approximately \$100,000 per case). The exact parameters of the encasements is highly dependent on the condition of the documents they house, and as such, the fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time.

Note: This analysis assumes the costs attributable to the Victory or Death letter would be paid from the Alamo Complex Account. However, according to the General Land Office, using this account for display outside of the Alamo Complex may not be an allowable use of the fund.

Local Government Impact

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 305 General Land Office and Veterans' Land Board, 306 Library & Archives Commission, 808 Historical Commission, 809 Preservation Board

LBB Staff: JMc, JPE, LCO, CSmi, TUf, NV