

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 24, 2015

TO: Honorable John Whitmire, Chair, Senate Committee on Criminal Justice

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB158 by West (Relating to a body worn camera program for certain law enforcement agencies in this state.), **As Introduced**

Based on the unavailability of data, the costs of equipping all the approximately 54,000 eligible law enforcement officers with body cameras and providing law enforcement agencies with associated data storage capacity cannot be determined. However, it is presumed the statewide costs in providing funding for body cameras and data storage capacity would likely be significant.

This bill would amend the Government Code to require all law enforcement agencies to apply for a grant from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to equip their commissioned law enforcement officers with body cameras, if those police officers regularly stop or detain motor vehicles or respond to calls for assistance from the public. The law enforcement officers meeting the standards of the bill presumably would be employed among most of the state's 2,644 law enforcement agencies.

According to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), there are 76,157 licensed law enforcement officers in Texas. Although it is difficult to determine the how many of these 76,157 law enforcement officers meet the standard of the bill (i.e., are engaged in patrolling or directly assisting the public), TCOLE has estimated approximately 54,000, or about 71 percent, might meet this standard.

While most of these officers are employed by local law enforcement agencies, such as municipal police departments or sheriff's departments, many are also employed by state entities. The Department of Public Safety, for example, employs approximately 3,600 law enforcement officers. Law enforcement officers are also employed by the Parks and Wildlife Department, Alcoholic Beverage Commission and Department of Criminal Justice. Further, many institutions of higher education possess their own campus police departments; for example, The University of Texas at Austin employs over 60 commissioned peace officers.

However, due to the unavailability of data, the cost of funding body cameras and associated data storage requirements among those law enforcement agencies that currently have not implemented any transition to using body cameras is unknown. Also unknown is the degree to which local and state law enforcement agencies are already in the process of implementing a shift toward fielding their law enforcement officers with body cameras. In addition, among those law enforcement agencies who are currently equipping their law enforcement officers with body cameras, it is unknown what sort of equipment is being used, and what sort of data storage arrangements have been negotiated with providers, or the costs of such products.

Based on the unavailability of data, the cost to equip all the approximately 54,000 eligible law enforcement officers with body cameras and associated data storage cannot be determined. However, DPS has indicated that equipping 3,700 law enforcement officers with body cameras and securing data storage rights with vendors would cost \$46,191,222 in fiscal year 2016 and \$7,400,487 in fiscal year 2017. The fiscal year 2016 costs primarily are related to information technology, and include the following: \$28,000,000 for a 3.25 petabyte video storage area network; \$3,596,000 for data circuits; \$1,500,000 for wide area network bandwidth; \$3,600,000 for aggregated services router; \$160,000 for network switches; \$3,800,000 for routers; and \$1,224,051 for IT contractors.

As such, while the costs of equipping all law enforcement personnel who meet the bill's standard cannot be determined, based on DPS' response, it is presumed the costs would likely be significant.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.

Local Government Impact

The bill would require a law enforcement agency to apply for grants to purchase body worn cameras, which must be worn during traffic stops, arrests, searches, and when responding to calls for service. According to the Texas Municipal League (TML), the cities of San Antonio, Houston, Lubbock, Denton, Sugar land, El Paso, Corpus Christi, Forth Worth, Tyler, New Boston, Diboll, and Ganado reported that they have some body worn cameras in use.

Currently, local police departments fund body worn cameras through a variety of sources, including grants from the County's District Attorney's office, the city's general fund, and police seizure accounts. Currently, Houston, Lubbock, El Paso, Corpus Christi fund body worn cameras, either in whole or in part, by using grants or loans from the County's District Attorney's office.

Cost for cameras can vary greatly. A body worn camera can vary from \$200 to \$7000, depending on the camera quality, network capabilities, data storage, quantity purchased, and maintenance agreement. According to TML, the City of Houston currently has purchased 100 body worn cameras for approximately \$1,300 per device and estimates a total cost of \$6,649,648 to outfit the full department. The City of Lubbock purchased 70 body worn cameras for approximately \$59,000, not including data storage, whereas the City of Denton reported that costs for 80 body worn cameras, including hardware, software, data storage, and maintenance, was \$98,905 for the first year and \$76,080 for the second and third year. The City of Corpus Christi currently has 78 body worn cameras at a cost of \$899 per unit, not including data storage. The department would require additional cameras to fully outfit its 250 uniformed officers. The City of Tyler has fully equipped all uniformed officers with 160 body cameras at cost of \$399 per unit. The department currently stores data using existing resources, however, the department anticipates needing an additional \$30,000 worth of storage.

According to the Texas Association of Counties (TAC), Tom Green County Sheriff Office estimates a cost of \$45,000 to outfit 65 officers; data storage would cost approximately \$20,000. The Randall County Sheriff's department anticipates \$18,000 for 30 body worn cameras; \$52,000 for hardware, software, and startup costs; \$12,000 for training costs; and \$1,000 for policy development and implementation for a total cost of \$2,766.66 per deputy. Harris County estimates a cost of 3.3 million dollars to outfit the department. Bexar County estimates \$1,073,600 in start-up costs and between \$323,280 and \$1,290,960 for data storage depending on usage. Additionally, Bexar County anticipates replacing the cameras every three years to maintain the

warranty.

TAC anticipates a significant impact to counties due to ancillary costs not covered under the grant. Officers would have to properly tag, store, review, and edit the videos for court presentations, expunction orders, and release under the Public Information Act. Thus, sheriff departments may incur significant training or hiring costs. There may also be cost to local courts and attorneys as each video would need to be reviewed and courts would have to have the technical ability to review and play video.

Source Agencies: 405 Department of Public Safety

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