

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 84TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 6, 2015

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

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB746 by Whitmire (Relating to the civil commitment of sexually violent predators.), As Introduced

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB746, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$18,822,333) through the biennium ending August 31, 2017.

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:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2016	(\$8,262,698)
2017	(\$10,559,635)
2018	(\$10,556,401)
2019	(\$10,553,467)
2020	(\$10,550,233)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable (Cost) from General Revenue Fund 1	Probable Revenue Gain from General Revenue Fund 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2015
2016	(\$8,333,376)	\$70,678	3.0
2017	(\$10,633,845)	\$74,210	3.0
2018	(\$10,634,145)	\$77,744	3.0
2019	(\$10,634,745)	\$81,278	3.0
2020	(\$10,635,045)	\$84,812	3.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would change the name of the Office of Violent Sex Offender Management (OVSOM) to the Texas Civil Commitment Office (TCCO); add two additional board members; amend the civil commitment process; and create a tiered treatment program with the ability of individual

movement between program tiers based on performance and treatment progress for eventual release from the program. It would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to provide psychiatric services, disability services, and housing for committed individuals with mental illness, intellectual or development disabilities, or physical disabilities that prevent the person from effectively participating in the civil commitment program.

The bill would also provide judicial causes of action for committed persons to seek less restrictive tiers or to challenge transfers to higher tiers, and create new classes of litigation for the Law Enforcement Defense Division (LEDD) at the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). The bill would change the court with jurisdiction over civil commitment cases from Montgomery District Court to a district court within the Second Administrative Judicial Region.

Methodology

It is assumed that services provided by TCCO will be a cost to General Revenue Funds of \$7,201,686 in fiscal year 2016, and \$9,415,608 in fiscal year 2017. In fiscal year 2016, the cost to provide these services is estimated to be \$6,936,847 in professional fees for housing and treatment, \$6,271 for board member travel and \$45,800 for a computer lab and software for committed clients to access state and federal courts and legal counsel. In fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2020, the cost to provide these services is estimated to be \$9,204,428 in professional fees for housing and treatment, \$5,978 for board member travel and \$21,500 for computer software costs. It is assumed that 2 full time equivalents (FTEs) will be needed by TCCO to establish due process for sexually violent predators as required by the legislation. The costs associated with the FTEs would be \$212,768 in fiscal year 2016 and \$183,702 in fiscal year 2017. Those costs include salaries, benefits, and other operating expenses. It is assumed that TCCO will recover treatment and housing costs from civil commitment clients that are not indigent. The collection of these fees is assumed to be slightly over \$70,000 per year and grow at 5% per year after fiscal year 2016. This analysis assumes that through the civil commitment program 283 sexually violent predators (SVPs) will be served in fiscal year 2016 and 333 in fiscal year 2017 through 2020. This analysis also assumes that TCCO can procure housing for the program.

It is assumed that the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) will provide the additional psychiatric and disability services included in the bill and that TCCO will provide housing for the SVPs. It is assumed that DADS can implement the bill within existing resources since the agency currently provides services to civilly committed persons. Federal law prohibits reimbursement for Medicaid services for individuals residing in a state hospital or other institution for mental disease, including those that are civilly committed; therefore services provided by DSHS will be a total cost to General Revenue Funds of \$785,285 in fiscal year 2016 and \$871,832 in fiscal year 2017. The cost to provide these mental health services is estimated to be \$648,000 in fiscal year 2016, and \$756,000 in fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2020. DSHS indicates that 1 FTE will be needed to coordinate and manage the additional services at a cost of \$137,285 in fiscal year 2016 and \$115,832 in fiscal year 2017. Those costs include salaries, benefits, and other operating expenses.

The Special Prosecution Unit (SPU), a grantee of the state responsible for initiating civil commitments for sexually violent predators, would have additional costs totaling \$346,405 each fiscal year from General Revenue Funds, assuming 50 civil commitments are evenly distributed across the 34 counties in the 2nd Administrative Judicial Region (1.5 cases per county per year): increased expenses of \$68,796 each year in employee travel; increased expenses of \$173,600 each year in expert witness expenses due to travel time; and one additional attorney at a cost of \$173,600 to cover the seven court of appeals districts that are in the 2nd Administrative Judicial Region, a projected increase in biennial review activities, and interlocutory appellate rights.

While the Office of the Attorney General has indicated the need for additional FTEs and administrative costs, it is assumed that the provisions of the bill can be implemented within existing agency resources. Based on the analysis provided by the Office of Court Administration, it is assumed the provisions of the bill can be implemented within existing resources. This analysis also assumes the provisions of the bill would not result in a significant impact on state correctional agencies.

Technology

Technology costs at TCCO total \$45,800 in fiscal year 2016, and \$21,500 for fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2020 to purchase computers and software for two new FTEs and 20 computers and software to establish a computer lab for clients in the civil commitment program to access the courts and legal information in a secure setting.

Technology costs at DSHS related to FTEs total \$5,232 in fiscal year 2016 and \$725 for fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2020 for computer software, hardware and data center services.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 116 Sunset Advisory Commission, 212 Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council, 301 Office of the Governor, 302 Office of the Attorney General, 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 405 Department of Public Safety, 529 Health and Human Services Commission, 537 State Health Services, Department of, 644 Juvenile Justice Department, 696 Department of Criminal Justice, 697 Board of Pardons and Paroles

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