

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE
Fiscal Note



Fiscal Note On: **SB 532** SLS 14RS 662
 Bill Text Version: **ENROLLED**
 Opp. Chamb. Action:
 Proposed Amd.:
 Sub. Bill For.:

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Dept./Agy.: Judiciary	Analyst: Matthew LaBruyere
Subject: Veteran's Court Program	

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 Provides for the creation of the Veteran's Court Program. (8/1/14)

Proposed law provides that each district court by rule may designate one or more divisions to preside over a Veterans Court program to which eligible veterans charged with either a felony or misdemeanor are assigned. Proposed law defines the "Veterans Court program" as the placement of eligible participants in the program with access to alcohol, substance, mental health, suicide assessment, intervention, treatment and management, and other related treatment and rehabilitative services by the use of non-adversarial approach involving prosecutors and defense attorneys to promote public safety and protect the due process rights of program participants. Proposed law provides that if the defendant requests to undergo treatment and is accepted into the Veterans Court program, the defendant will be placed under the program for a period of at least 12 months. Proposed law provides for an exception in Public Records Law regarding the records of the treatment facility attended by the veteran from a Veterans Court program.

EXPENDITURES	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Local Funds	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	
Annual Total						

REVENUES	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	\$0
Annual Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

This bill may result in an indeterminable increase in local expenditures and a potential decrease in SGF expenditures. The bill provides that each district court by rule may designate one or more divisions to preside over a veteran's court program. The exact fiscal impact is indeterminable since it is not known how many judicial districts will actually create these specialized courts. The specific expenditures associated with the establishment of the veterans court are dependent upon the size and scope of the veterans court. To the extent the veteran's court involves court hearings above the normal current court activity, the district courts may likely experience an increase in expenditures.

A veterans court is a specialized court docket (like drug courts) that focuses on veterans who have been charged with a nonviolent crime as a result of drug or alcohol addiction or mental health illness. For illustrative purposes, the Orleans Criminal District Court (CDC) currently has a veterans court that has 10 clients. There is currently no additional cost of this court program. The court includes the judge, a member of the District Attorney's Office, a member of Probation & Parole, a volunteer mentor, the court coordinator, a member from the Public Defenders Office, and a Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) specialist. The VJO specialist is employed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). Services for veterans are provided by the USDVA. To the extent the veteran is eligible for USDVA benefits, then USDVA would provide the treatment services the veteran needs. Services are only provided at VA medical centers and clinics. There are 3 VA medical centers in the state (Shreveport, Alexandria, and New Orleans) and 15 clinics throughout the state.

There are various federal resources available from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Justice for Vets program in the form of grants and local program training to help fund and start veterans court programs.

To the extent an offender, who is a veteran, completes the program and is not sentenced to jail, the Department of Corrections (DOC) would not pay \$24.39 per day to house the offender in a local facility. However, if the offender does not complete the program and is ordered to serve time in jail, DOC would recognize a cost of \$24.39 per day for housing the the offender at the local level.

REVENUE EXPLANATION

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

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| <u>Senate</u> | <u>Dual Referral Rules</u> | <u>House</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S} |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S&H} | | | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(F)(2) >= \$500,000 State Rev. Reduc. {H & S} |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S&H} | | | <input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S} |

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