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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/05/13

SPONSOR Trujillo, J. LAST UPDATED _____ HB 296

SHORT TITLE Expand Restorative Justice Services SB _____

ANALYST Aledo-Sandoval

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY13	FY14		
	\$300.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 296 appropriates \$300 thousand from the general fund to the Children, Youth and Families Department for the purpose of expanding and implementing restorative justice services.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$300 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2014 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the AOC, restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior, often bringing victim and offender together to mediate some form of restitution agreeable to all involved. Restorative justice programs and services can take many forms, and when successful they can reduce the workload on the criminal justice system by helping resolve criminal behavior outside of the courtroom.

CYFD states that for the community, restorative services such as victim/offender conferencing and victim/offender mediation address the welfare of all of its citizens by creating conditions that promote healthy relationships that deter crime and promote a sense of community ownership within youth.

Currently, the CYFD spends \$120 thousand on three restorative justice contracts to provide restorative justice services in five counties.

The CYFD's FY11 Juvenile Justice Services and Youth and Family Services annual report states that policies focusing on detention reform, expansion of children's behavioral health services, restorative justice initiatives, drug courts, and other front-end community services and resources have led to declining juvenile commitments over the last decade.

The AOC states that HB 296 does not provide specific information about the types of restorative justice programs the appropriation may be used for, making it difficult to quantify the possible effects of such programs, though offenders who are transformed by restorative justice programs may also be less likely to offend again, thus helping to slow the "revolving door of incarceration."

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

CYFD states that it is still in the process of implementing in Juvenile Justice Model Cambiar. This model has some aspects of Restorative Justice built into it. Implementing a total Restorative Justice model may pose administrative, programmatic and operational burdens on CYFD. However, HB 296 does not call for implementation of a total restorative justice model.

MCAS/bm