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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Knauer DATE TYPED: 03/01/01 HB 854
 SHORT TITLE: Crises Intervention for Law Enforcement SB _____
 ANALYST: Trujillo

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
			\$ 300.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
 Attorney General (AG)
 Department of Public Safety (DPS)
 Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

HB 854 enacts a new section of the law requiring the Department of Public Safety to maintain a 24-hour toll free crisis hotline for use by law enforcement officers.

Significant Issues

DPS reports the most significant issue is the unfunded mandated nature of HB 854. Please see Fiscal Implications and Substantive Issues, below.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

According to DPS, the legislation requires DPS to maintain a 24-hour toll free, crisis hotline for police officers to call regarding job related depression, anxiety, stress or other psychological or emotional tension, trauma or disorder. The bill does not carry an appropriation, yet requires the department to maintain this operation. DPS estimates this will require a minimum of 5 FTE to operate a 24-hour telephone hotline. These FTE will not be entry level, but rather would require

House Bill 854 -- Page 2

the employment of professional counselors, psychologists, or similar professionals to handle calls of this nature. Estimate of salary and benefit and start-up costs for this program run \$300,000 on a recurring basis.

It must be noted that this bill does not carry an appropriation for this mandate to the Department of Public Safety.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The bill does not carry an appropriation, yet requires the department to maintain this operation. DPS estimates this will require a minimum of 5 FTE to operate a 24-hour telephone hotline.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

DPS suggests the legislation be amended to include an appropriation of \$300,000 from the general fund to DPS on a recurring and annual basis to fulfill the purposes of the legislation.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

DPS currently has a program for its employees that provides this type of service, albeit without the use of a hotline. This service has been provided to other agencies at no cost, upon request. The services provided include critical incident debriefing, peer support counseling, and referral to a contract psychologist or the state's Employee Assistance Program.

The major alternative which must be considered is funding DPS appropriately to maintain such an operation.

Another alternative would be to continue to allow individual agencies to handle such referrals under their own plans.

LAT/njw:ar