## **BILL SUMMARY** 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the 60<sup>th</sup> Legislature

Bill No.:SB870Version:ENGRRequest Number:Author:Author:Rep. WilliamsDate:5/1/2025Impact:OJA: Unknown

## **Research Analysis**

The engrossed version of SB870 creates the "Accountability, Transparency, and Protection for Exploited Youth Act." The measure requires employees and contractors of a state-run juvenile facility, private contractor, or group home under the supervision of the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) to report any form of sexual misconduct or exploitation between staff, volunteers, or contractors with juveniles. The reports must be filed with the facility supervisor and the Office of Juvenile Affairs' Independent Oversight Committee (IOC). Individuals who fail to report such incidents will be guilty of a felony and subject to a term of imprisonment not to exceed 2 years and/or a maximum fine of \$5,000.00. Such persons as well as the OJA and the contracted entity will also be held civilly liable, facing possible civil fines of up to \$50,000. Failure to properly train employees will also subject the OJA and the contracted entity to liability. Investigation reports must be forwarded to the district attorney in the district where the abuse took place. The measure grants certain parties access to files and records of cases relating to allegations or findings of physical or sexual violence against a minor in custody. Such access will be limited to files and records directly related to the incident of sexual violence. All parties with such access will be bound by confidentiality requirements and must not further disclose the records except as necessary for legal proceedings or investigations

Prepared By: Suzie Nahach, House Research Staff

## **Fiscal Analysis**

The Engrossed version of SB870 creates the Accountability, Transparency, and Protection for Exploited Youth Act and sets forth new duties for the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) in administering the Act. Officials with OJA have provided the following information:

OJA financial staff do not have enough information to calculate a meaningful fiscal impact. Any fiscal burden imposed on our agency from the waiver of the Governmental Tort Claims Act would require us to guess as to how often suit would be brought against the agency, and further approximate the typical cost of that litigation. There are too many unknowns for agency officials to feel confident either way as to whether or not additional funding would be needed.

Therefore, in its current form, SB870 has the potential to create an unknown fiscal impact to OJA. However, without more statutory guidance, the agency is unable to quantify any potential funding needs, and the impact remains unknown.

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## **Other Considerations**

None.

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