

ITEM REDUCTIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCING
 81st Regular Session, 2010-11 Agency Item Reductions
 Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas (ABEST)

Date: 3/5/2010
 Time: 8:12:54AM
 Page: 1 of 4

Agency code: 456

Agency name: **Board of Plumbing Examiners**

Item Priority and Name/ Method of Financing	2010	2011	Biennial Total	Target
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1 Excess Vehicle Monies Returned

Item Comment: PLEASE NOTE: During the 81st Legislative Session, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE), along with five other Article VIII regulatory agencies, was granted a special one-time appropriation for a shared regulatory database licensing system through the Health Professions Council (HPC), to replace the Board's outdated licensing system. In fiscal year 2010 TSBPE received \$569,121 in additional appropriations for its share of the project; this amount has already been paid to HPC. The Board is requesting that this one-time cost not be included in the 5% calculation, which would reduce the 5% reduction amount by \$28,456, from \$235,135 to \$206,679.

For Item 1: Two vehicles were purchased at the beginning of FY 2010 for the Enforcement section. One vehicle was a replacement vehicle and the other was purchased for a new Field Representative/Investigator who began employment in September 2009. The Board was able to purchase these two vehicles at a lesser cost than anticipated when preparing the Legislative Appropriation Request (LAR), which resulted in a savings of \$6,477.

GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

1 General Revenue Fund	\$6,477	\$0	
General Revenue Funds Total	\$6,477	\$0	
Item Total	\$6,477	\$0	

* - Indicates amount does not meet target requirements.

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2 SB 1354 Appropriations including New Field Rep/Investigator Position

Item Comment: Key performance measures will be affected by the elimination of this position. Estimates per fiscal year: reduction of Number of Job Sites Monitored by 1,061; Number of Field Investigations Conducted reduced by 86; Number of Complaints Resolved reduced by 95; increased Complaint Resolution time. Revenues from administrative penalties and license and registration fees will be reduced, possibly by \$20,000 in FY 2010-2011 and \$100,000 in FY 2012-2013. Further explanation follows:

The enactment of SB 1354 provided for a new Field Representative/Investigator to begin work in May 2010, to cover increased jurisdiction created by SB 1354. Appropriations provided for this enactment were \$40,320 in FY 2010 and \$55,278 in FY 2011. Start-up costs included a State vehicle at a cost of \$23,000 in FY 2010, along with other one-time costs. Ongoing costs for each year included salary, gasoline for the vehicle, travel, cellular phone, fax line costs, and consumable supplies. The Board has already raised fees to cover this position, and licensees are already paying the increased fee amounts.

The Field Representative/Investigator's primary duties are enforcement of the Plumbing License Law, investigation of consumer complaints, job site compliance checks, identifying violations, and issuing notices of non-compliance. The Field Rep/Investigator's duties encourage compliance as well as renewal of licenses and registrations, and also ensure that fees and administrative penalties collected by the Board meet or exceed its expenditures and help meet the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate. Elimination of this position will not allow effective coverage of the increased jurisdiction and will directly and indirectly affect examination, license and registration revenues collected, and administrative penalties collected, and the Board may not be able to meet the revenues required as set forth in the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate.

GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

1 General Revenue Fund	\$40,320	\$55,278
General Revenue Funds Total	\$40,320	\$55,278
Item Total	\$40,320	\$55,278

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3 Eliminate New Licensing Department Position

Item Comment: During the 81st Legislative Session, the Board was awarded one additional FTE to be utilized within the licensing program section. Currently, the agency has only one (1) employee dedicated full time to licensing. The additional employee was granted to assist in meeting the demands of issuing and renewing licenses and registrations for the Board's increased population. The number of licenses, certifications and registrations issued by the Board has more than doubled, from approximately 21,800 in FY 2001 to more than 54,800 in FY 2009. The increase in the population of licensees and registrants has resulted in an increase in workload, including telephone calls, emails, and processing of applications and continuing education credits. Although the number of licenses, certifications and registrations has more than doubled since 2001, the number of employees (one) responsible for processing applications and inquiries has remained the same. This employee would also be responsible for processing and maintaining the agency's database of Certificate of Insurance forms required for each plumbing business in the state. SB 1354 increased the number of Certificates of Insurance the Board must receive and process each day. These certificates must be posted on the agency's website each day for municipalities to verify before issuing plumbing permits to plumbers. Without this position, posting of these certificates could delay the issuance of plumbing permits, which in turn would delay the start of plumbing jobs.

GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

1 General Revenue Fund	\$25,030	\$41,500	
General Revenue Funds Total	\$25,030	\$41,500	
Item Total	\$25,030	\$41,500	

4 Eliminate an Existing Field Representative/Investigator Position

Item Comment: Key performance measures will be affected by the elimination of this position. Estimates per fiscal year: reduction of Number of Job Sites Monitored by 1,061; Number of Field Investigations Conducted reduced by 86; Number of Complaints Resolved reduced by 95; increased Complaint Resolution time. Revenues from administrative penalties and license fees will be reduced, possibly by \$60,000 in FY 2010-2011 and \$100,000 in FY 2012-2013. Further explanation follows:

The elimination of an existing Field Representative/Investigator position and associated costs will reduce the agency's ability to protect the public's health and safety through enforcement of plumbing regulations, and reduce the amount of fees and penalties collected by the Board. The Board administers more than 54,000 current licenses, endorsements and registrations. However, the agency currently employs only ten (10) Field Rep/Investigators, who are located around the state and work from their homes and agency vehicles. Their duties include investigation of consumer complaints and job site compliance checks, identifying violations, and issuing notices of non-compliance. The Field Rep/Investigator's duties encourage compliance, including renewal of licenses and registrations, and also ensure that fees and administrative penalties collected by the Board meet or exceed its expenditures and help it meet the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate. If this position is eliminated, it will affect examination, license and registration revenues, and administrative penalties collected, including revenues required as set forth in the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate. The Board has raised fees to cover this position and all associated costs, and licensees are already paying the increased fee amounts. The Board also anticipates having to pay a significant amount of unemployment benefits if this position is eliminated.

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GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS				
1 General Revenue Fund	\$21,700	\$44,830		
General Revenue Funds Total	\$21,700	\$44,830		
Item Total	\$21,700	\$44,830		
Agency General Revenue Total	\$93,527	\$141,608		
Agency GR Dedicated Total				
Agency Grand Total	\$93,527	\$141,608	\$235,135	\$235,135

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