

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1715  
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Business & Industry  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Wage theft has been reported to be commonplace across the United States, and while there do not appear to be studies specifically focused on Texas, interested observers assert there is no reason to believe that occurrences are less common here. In addition to the harm experienced by workers who are victims, wage theft places law-abiding businesses at a competitive disadvantage and essentially compromises the operation of free markets. With no study specific to Texas, these observers contend that the legislature needs more information on wage theft in Texas to determine the scope and impact of the problem. In response to this apparent need, H.B. 1715 directs the comptroller of public accounts, in cooperation with the Texas Workforce Commission, to address this issue.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1715 requires the comptroller of public accounts, in cooperation with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), to prepare a report on wage theft by employers in Texas. The bill requires the report to include information regarding the demographic groups and industries most affected by wage theft, an analysis of the economic impact of wage theft on employees and its effects on competition within an industry, and an analysis prepared by the TWC relating to remedies available to wage theft victims. The bill requires the comptroller, not later than December 1, 2016, to provide a copy of the report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each standing committee of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over matters relating to labor and employment. The bill's provisions expire June 1, 2017.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.