

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 681
By: Zaffirini
Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties explain that in counties with at least nine district courts, a majority of the district judges may, with the approval of the commissioners court, appoint a bailiff to be in charge of the central jury room for the county. The parties point out inconsistency between the law relating to the use of an electronic jury selection system, which refers to the district clerk as the person in charge of jury selection, and the longstanding practice in Bexar County of having the bailiff in charge of the central jury room administer the electronic jury selection process as well. S.B. 681 seeks to clarify the law.

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

S.B. 681 amends the Government Code to add a bailiff appointed to be in charge of the central jury room and the general panel of the county to the persons who may be designated as the officer in charge of the jury selection process in a county with a population of at least 1.7 million and in which more than 75 percent of the population resides in a single municipality under a plan for the selection of names of persons for jury service with the aid of electronic or mechanical equipment instead of drawing the names from a jury wheel. The bill specifies that a bailiff who is designated as the officer in charge of the jury selection process under such a plan is responsible for giving the secretary of state notice not later than the 90th day before the date a certain juror list provided to counties by the secretary of state is required. The bill includes a bailiff appointed to be in charge of the central jury room and the general panel of the county among the persons authorized to remove a person's name from the record of names for selection of persons for jury service with the aid of electronic or mechanical equipment in a county with a population of at least 1.7 million and in which more than 75 percent of the population resides in a single municipality if a written summons for jury service sent by a sheriff, constable, or bailiff is undeliverable.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.