

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2953
By: Moody
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted that some local governments with limited tax bases are financially unable to appropriately compensate the peace officers that serve them. There have been calls for the state to step in to supplement officer pay in such areas in an effort to provide for fairer compensation, greater officer retention, and higher quality law enforcement work. H.B. 2953 seeks to answer those calls by providing for the establishment of a grant program to award grants to qualifying local governments to supplement peace officer pay.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the governor in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2953 amends the Government Code to require the governor to establish by rule a grant program to award grants to a qualifying local government to ensure the starting salary for all peace officers employed by the qualifying local government is at least \$32,500 per year. The bill requires those rules to:

- provide the maximum taxable value of property that may be located in a county or municipality in order for the county or municipality to be considered a qualifying local government; and
- prescribe the manner by which a qualifying local government applies for a grant and by which grants will be allocated to applicants if the amount of grants for which qualifying local governments have applied exceeds the amount of money available for the grants.

The bill requires the governor to award grants to qualifying local governments from money appropriated to the governor for that purpose except during any period for which money is not appropriated for that purpose.

H.B. 2953 requires the comptroller of public accounts to use existing resources to conduct a study to determine the amount of money needed to fully fund the grant program established by the bill for the two-year period beginning September 1, 2021. The bill requires the comptroller, not later than January 1, 2021, to submit a report on the study to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and each member of the legislature and authorizes the legislature to consider the report when making appropriations to the governor for the 2022-2023 state fiscal biennium. Provisions relating to the study and report of the comptroller take effect September 1, 2019.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Except as otherwise provided, September 1, 2021.