

SUBJECT: Application of nepotism laws to substitute teachers

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Sadler, Dear, Grusendorf, Hernandez, Hochberg, McCoulskey, West, Williamson
1 nay — Uher

WITNESSES: For — Ray Freeman, Italy Independent School District
Against — None
On — None

DIGEST: HB 2000 would allow relatives of school board members to serve as substitute teachers in districts located in towns with populations of less than 2,000.

An officer of the state or a political subdivision could employ a relative as a personal attendant if the officer's physical infirmities required personal assistance.

SUPPORTERS SAY: School districts in small towns have difficulty hiring substitute teachers due to the small employment pool. While relatives of school board members are generally interested and eligible, they are prohibited from serving as substitutes by nepotism statutes. HB 2000 would allow relatives of school board members to be hired as substitute teachers to help resolve the teacher shortages in small towns.

HB 2000 would allow relatives to be hired as personal assistants for certain government officials with physical infirmities. In some cases relatives may be the most appropriate person to act as a personal assistant because of the nature of an infirmity or special knowledge about a persons' condition.

OPPONENTS SAY: Nepotism laws are designed to prevent public officers from hiring others because of family or marital relationships. Better ways could be found to deal with small district's teacher shortages than making a loophole in the nepotism laws.