

SUBJECT: Adding information on petitions to increase sheriff's department salaries

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Ramsay, G. Lewis, B. Brown, Chisum, Farabee, Shields

0 nays

3 absent — Hilderbran, Krusee, Salinas

WITNESSES: For — Jim Allison, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas; Beth Wisenbaker, Hopkins County Commissioners Court

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Under Local Government Code, sec. 152.072, voters in a county with more than 25,000 people may petition the county commissioners court to increase the minimum salary of sheriff's department employees. The petition must include a statement of the amount of the proposed raise, the effective date, a list of five qualified voters authorized to negotiate with the commissioners court if necessary, and signatures of at least 25 percent of the number of qualified voters who voted in the previous county officer election.

DIGEST: HB 3073 would require that a petition by voters in a county with more than 25,000 people to increase the minimum salary of sheriff's department employees state that the proposed pay raise could not exceed 10 percent of the current salary. The proposed raise could not take effect before the start of the county's next fiscal year.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2001.