

SUBJECT: Allowing for supplemental civil service commissions in certain counties

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Coleman, Springer, Biedermann, Stickland, Thierry, Uresti

0 nays

3 absent — Hunter, Neave, Roberts

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 26 — 28-3 (Hall, Hancock, Huffines), on Local and Uncontested

WITNESSES: *On House companion bill, HB 1756:*
For — Craig Pardue, Dallas County; Donald Lee Texas Conference of Urban Counties; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Melissa Shannon, County of Bexar Commissioners Court; Charles Reed, Dallas County Commissioners Court; Donna Warndof, Harris County; Mark Mendez, Tarrant County)

Against — Chris Jones, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas

BACKGROUND: Local Government Code, sec. 158.009 requires civil service commissions to adopt, publish, and enforce rules relating to:

- the definition of a county employee;
- selection and classification of county employees;
- competitive examinations;
- promotions, seniority, and tenure;
- layoffs and dismissals;
- disciplinary actions;
- grievance procedures; and
- other matters relating to the selection of employees and the procedural and substantive rights, advancement, benefits, and

working conditions of county employees.

Some observers have suggested that the Dallas County Civil Service Commission has experienced an increased workload that has created an administrative burden.

DIGEST: CSSB 470 would allow the commissioners court of a county that met certain population and other requirements listed in the bill (Dallas County) to create one or more supplemental civil service commissions to assist in administering the system. The commissioners court would appoint three individuals to serve as members of each supplemental commission and designate one of the members as chair. The same rules that govern the appointment of board members to the civil service commission would apply to appointments for supplemental commissions.

The commissioners court could delegate the authority to adopt, publish, or enforce rules to no more than one supplemental commission. A supplemental commission that was designated such authority would be required to discharge those duties and would be the exclusive commission that could exercise rulemaking authority for the matters delegated.

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, 2017.

NOTES: CSSB 470 differs from the Senate-passed version by limiting the scope of the bill to Dallas County.

A companion bill, HB 1756 by Neave, was reported favorably by the House County Affairs Committee on April 12.