

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 745
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Government Organization
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, state employees are required to complete a travel voucher in order to receive reimbursement for travel expenses they incur. After completing the voucher, the employee must submit it to their respective agency in paper form. Issues can arise if an error is made on the voucher that requires resubmission, causing delays in processing. Furthermore, a state employee who is displaced from his or her home or office due to unforeseen circumstances may be left without access to materials needed to submit a voucher and with no other means available for submission.

S.B. 745 authorizes a state agency to allow the electronic submission of travel vouchers, thus streamlining the process of travel reimbursement and providing employees with another means of submission.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the comptroller of public accounts is modified in SECTION 2 (Section 660.027, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 660.024(a), Government Code, to authorize the advance written approval, required to be given from the chief administrator of a state agency for any travel related to official state business for which reimbursement or an advance for travel expenses is sought, to be communicated electronically, rather than to require a copy of the written approval be submitted with the travel voucher to the comptroller of public accounts (comptroller) in accordance with Section 660.027.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 660.027(b), (d), and (e), Government Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that a voucher submitted under Subsection (a) (regarding issuance of payment for travel expense) is valid only if the state agency submitting the voucher approves it in accordance with Chapter 2103 (Expenditures by State Agencies) and, if required by law, certifies the voucher, and the state employee who incurred the travel expense or, if the employee is unavailable, another individual acceptable to the comptroller approves the description, information, and documentation required by Subsection (d), rather than voucher, in writing or electronically, except that the employee's approval is not required if another person is required by law to provide the approval.

(d) Requires that a voucher be supported by a description of the official state business performed and the information and documentation that the comptroller considers necessary for the comptroller to determine compliance with this chapter, the travel provisions of the General Appropriations Act, and the rules adopted by the comptroller under this chapter. Deletes existing text requiring that a voucher describe the official state business performed and be accompanied by the information necessary for the comptroller to determine compliance with this chapter.

(e) Authorizes the comptroller to require a state agency to provide to the comptroller the description, information, and documentation required under Subsection (d) on the form adopted by the comptroller under Subsection (c) (regarding submission of a voucher),

electronically, by submitting receipts or other documents, or by any combination thereof.
Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 660.028, Government Code, by amending Subsections (b)-(d) and adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(b) Authorizes the comptroller, if the comptroller audits a state agency's voucher after the comptroller issues a warrant or initiates an electronic funds transfer in response to the voucher, to require the agency to maintain in its files the description, information, and documentation, rather than receipts, relating to the travel expense paid or reimbursed by the voucher until the comptroller audits the voucher.

(c) Makes a conforming change.

(d) Makes a conforming change.

(e) Authorizes the comptroller to require or authorize the description, information, and documentation relating to a travel expense payment or reimbursement to be maintained in paper form or electronically.

SECTION 4. Amends Sections 660.043(b) and (d), Government Code, as follows:

(b) Authorizes a longer route between two points to be considered the most cost-effective route only if the documentation, rather than voucher, states that the longer route is more cost-effective and provides a reasonable justification for that statement. Makes a conforming change.

(d) Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 660.147(b), Government Code, to prohibit a state agency from paying or reimbursing a state employee for a travel expense associated with a training seminar conducted by the agency for its employees unless the chief administrator of the agency or the administrator's designee certifies certain information in the supporting documentation, rather than on the voucher or other expense reimbursement form.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2009.