

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R8306 TJB-D

H.B. 2131
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Administration
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, Texans with concealed handgun licenses (CHL) can bypass certain security devices at the entrances of the Capitol building. To obtain a CHL, an applicant must meet certain requirements, including showing proof of identity and residency, paying a license fee, and having a criminal background check.

H.B. 2131 establishes a pass for expedited access that allows a person to enter the Capitol building and extension more conveniently and sets out requirements for obtaining the pass that are similar to those applicable for obtaining a CHL.

H.B. 2131 amends current law relating to the issuance of a pass for expedited access to the State Capitol.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas in SECTION 1 (Section 411.0625, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 411, Government Code, by adding Section 411.0625, as follows:

Sec. 411.0625. PASS FOR EXPEDITED ACCESS TO CAPITOL. (a) Requires the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas (DPS) to allow a person to enter the Capitol and the Capitol Extension, including any public space in the Capitol or Capitol Extension, in the same manner as DPS allows entry to a person who presents a concealed handgun license under Subchapter H (License to Carry a Concealed Handgun) if the person:

- (1) obtains from DPS a Capitol access pass; and
- (2) presents the pass to the appropriate law enforcement official when entering the building or a space within the building.

(b) Requires a person, to be eligible for a Capitol access pass, to meet the eligibility requirements applicable to a license to carry a concealed handgun under Subchapter H, other than requirements regarding evidence of handgun proficiency.

(c) Requires DPS to adopt rules to establish a procedure by which a resident of the state may apply for and be issued a Capitol access pass. Requires that rules adopted under this section include provisions for eligibility, application, approval, issuance, and renewal that:

- (1) require DPS to conduct the same background check on an applicant for a Capitol access pass that is conducted on an applicant for a concealed handgun license under Subchapter H;

(2) enable DPS to conduct the background check described by Subdivision (1); and

(3) establish application and renewal fees in amounts sufficient to cover the cost of administering this section, not to exceed the amounts of similar fees required for a concealed handgun license under Section 411.174 (Application).

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.