

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R8640 SCL-F

H.B. 1879
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Intergovernmental Relations
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Under current law, county commissioners are required to complete at least 16 classroom hours of continuing education in a 12-month period. However, a commissioner is exempt from the annual 16 classroom hours of continuing education if he or she has served a county with a population of 1.3 million or more continuously for 12 years or more and attends annually at least 15 hours of staff briefings on continuing education subjects approved by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas. County commissioners in our biggest counties depend on their large staffs to regularly keep them apprised of information related to local governance including county government law and operations and legislative changes related to those issues. Additionally, commissioners in these large counties who are also attorneys are required to annually complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing legal education (CLE). The type of CLE courses available to attorneys is vast and includes courses a county commissioner would find relevant to county governance.

H.B. 1879 extends the current exemption to a commissioner who has been licensed as an attorney in Texas for 12 years or more, has completed at least 64 hours of continuing education approved by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas, and annually attends at least 15 hours of staff briefings on continuing education subjects approved by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas.

H.B. 1879 amends current law relating to exemptions from continuing education requirements for certain county commissioners.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 81.0025(e), Local Government Code, as follows:

(e) Provides that this section does not apply to a county commissioner who:

(1) serves in a county with a population of 1.3 million or more;

(2) meets at least one of the following requirements:

(A) has served continuously for 12 years or more; or

(B) is an attorney licensed to practice law in this state for 12 years or more and has completed at least 64 hours of continuing education approved by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas; and

(3) attends at least 15 hours of staff briefing on continuing education subjects in each 12-month period as approved by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.