

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2309
By: Kolkhorst
Natural Resources & Economic Development
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 2309 transfers jurisdiction and maintenance over the Star of The Republic Museum from Blinn College District to the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The bill allows Blinn to retain ownership of the facility and requires THC to coordinate with an advisory committee at Blinn to promote education and public awareness programs at the museum, Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, and the Barrington Living History Farm.

The Star of The Republic Museum is currently under the control of Blinn College, requiring them to receive additional appropriations each session for its maintenance and operation. Transferring the museum will allow Blinn to focus on its core educational mission. Additionally, THC has the expertise and knowledge necessary to operate a facility like this.

As proposed, S.B. 2309 amends current law relating to the transfer of jurisdiction over and management of the Star of the Republic Museum to the Texas Historical Commission.

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 Chapter 442, Government Code, by adding Subchapter B-1, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER B-1. STAR OF THE REPUBLIC MUSEUM

Sec. 442.061. DEFINITION. Defines "museum" as the Star of the Republic Museum for purposes of this subchapter.

Sec. 442.062. JURISDICTION AND MAINTENANCE OF MUSEUM. (a) Provides that the museum and its contents are under the jurisdiction of the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Provides that THC is responsible for the preservation, maintenance, and operation of the museum.

(b) Provides that notwithstanding Subsection (a), Blinn College District maintains ownership of the museum, the land on which the museum is located, and the artifacts in the museum.

(c) Provides that except as provided by Subsection (b), any power or duty related to the museum formerly vested in any other state agency or entity is vested solely in THC.

(d) Requires THC to, in coordination with an advisory committee appointed by the board of trustees of the Blinn College District, promote the educational and public awareness programs at the museum, the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, and the Barrington Living History Farm.

Sec. 442.063. GRANTS; DONATIONS. Authorizes THC to accept a grant or donation for any program or purpose of the museum.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that on January 1, 2020, the following are transferred to THC:

(1) all powers and duties of Blinn College District relating to the Star of the Republic Museum;

(2) all unobligated and unexpended funds appropriated, donated, or contributed to Blinn College District designated for the administration of any part of the Star of the Republic Museum; and

(3) all files and other records of Blinn College District kept by Blinn College District regarding the Star of the Republic Museum.

(b) Requires Blinn College District, notwithstanding any other law, to continue to perform functions and activities related to the Star of the Republic Museum until January 1, 2020, and provides that the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2019.