

SUBJECT: Requiring initial and continuing education for police chiefs

COMMITTEE: Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 5 ayes — Oakley, Bailey, Allen, Edwards, Madden

0 nays

4 absent — Carter, Driver, McCoulskey

WITNESSES: (*On original bill*)

For — Jimmy Ray Fawcett, Texas Police Chiefs Association

Against — Jim Lyde, Texas Municipal Police Association

BACKGROUND: Police chiefs in Texas receive the same training and continuing education as that received by all police officers certified by Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). TCLEOSE requires all peace officers, among other requirements, to complete 560 hours of police training coursework, pass a written state licensing test and a physical exam, submit to drug and psychological tests and have a clean criminal history.

Peace officers must also qualify annually for firearms training, as well as undergo 40 hours of in-service training every two years. While the training and the continuing education are very relevant to a police officer who is out on patrol, they do not address the management issues faced by police chiefs.

DIGEST: CSHB 1953 would require each police chief in this state to receive at least 40 hours of continuing education under this section each two-year period. However, a chief subject to these requirements would be exempt from the continuing education requirements under sec. 415.034 of the Government Code, including education on civil rights, racial sensitivity, cultural diversity, child abuse, child neglect, family violence and sexual assault.

In the two-year period that a person first serves as chief, the person would need to complete 80 hours of initial training. The initial police chief training would be in addition to the initial training and continuing education required by Chapter 415 of the Government Code, providing for TCLEOSE officer certification training and continuing education.

The bill would require the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas to establish and offer programs for initial and continuing education for police chiefs. The curriculum would need to relate to law enforcement management issues and be approved by TCLEOSE. The bill would allow the Institute to waive:

- all or part of the 80 hours of initial training if the training had been done in the two years prior to becoming chief, or
- the 40 hours of continuing education if the training had been done in the preceding two years.

The bill would take effect September 1, 1995.

**NOTES:**

The committee substitute adds language requiring that the police chief curriculum be approved by TCLEOSE. In addition, the substitute specifically exempts chiefs from the continuing education requirements in sec. 415.034 of the Government Code.

The fiscal note indicates that the cost out of the institute would be \$287,500 in 1996 and \$372,500 in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000; however, the fiscal note also anticipates that the funds in the institute could not cover these costs. HB 2617 by Oakley, which would change the operation and management of the institute, possibly resulting in a greater ability to retain funds, has been referred to the Calendars Committee.