

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 12
By: Swinford
Government Reform
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently the component agencies of the legislative branch are configured in a variety of different manners. The Legislative Budget Board as well as the Texas Legislative Council are both chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, whereas the Legislative Audit Committee elects its own Chairman.

H.B. 12 would alter the organization of the Texas Legislative Council, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Legislative Audit Committee. H.B. 12 would also add an two additional members to the Sunset Advisory Commission as well as altering representation on the Texas Legislative Council.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 12 allows the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor to serve as joint chairs of the Legislative Audit Committee. It provides that subpoenas issued by the committee must be signed by either of the chairs of the committee or the secretary.

H.B. 12 designates the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor as joint chairs of the Legislative Budget Board. It allows the board to act on any matter that is within its jurisdiction by a majority vote if a quorum is present. H.B. 12 allows the board to meet at any time at the request of either of the joint chairs, as well as upon the written petition of a majority of the members of the board from each house. H.B. 12 allows expenses of the board to be reimbursed upon the approval of one of the joint chairs, and grants either of the joint chairs the authority to appoint inspection committees. Furthermore, either of the joint chairs' signatures is required for the issuance of a subpoena by the board.

H.B. 12 decreases the number of House members serving on the Texas Legislative Council from nine to four. It also provides that the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor serve as joint chairs of the Council. The Council may meet at any time at the request of either of the joint chairs, and a majority of the members of the council from each house of the legislature now constitutes a quorum, instead of the previous requirement of twelve members. H.B. 12 allows council expenditures and salaries to be reimbursed upon approval by either of the joint chairs. Advisory committees can be appointed by either of the joint chairs as well. Any subpoena issued by the Council must first be signed by either of the joint chairs, and either of the chairs may request the attorney general to issue opinions or render advice to the Council.

H.B. 12 increases the number of appointees to the Sunset Advisory Commission made by the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor from four members of each house to five. The Speaker and Lieutenant Governor will continue to also appoint one member of the public to serve on the commission. Seven members of the commission now constitute a quorum.

This Act takes effect December 1, 2003.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act will take effect December 1, 2003.