

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2157
By: Hartnett
Judicial Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The 69th Legislature created the Judicial and Court Personnel Training Fund (JCPTF) to provide funds for the continuing legal education of Texas judges. The 76th Legislature added several other categories of persons eligible under the JCPTF. These included full-time associate judges appointed pursuant to Chapter 201 of the Family Code and full-time masters, magistrates, referees, and associate judges appointed pursuant to Chapter 54 of the Government Code.

Currently, the 41 Title IV-D masters (who handle child support cases) and the 10 foster-care associate judges (both appointed pursuant to Chapter 201 of the Family Code) are excluded from the JCPTF program. Given their caseload (over 120,000 cases in FY 2002) and the sensitivity of their areas of specialty, additional training would be beneficial to both these judicial officers and the public. H.B. 2157 provides that the Title IV-D masters and the foster-care associate judges are eligible for training under the JCPTF.

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. 2157 amends the Government Code to provide that masters appointed pursuant to Chapter 201 of the Family Code are included in the "use of funds" provisions found in Section 56.003 of the Government Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003.