

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2756  
By: Burnam  
Elections  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

As one of its interim charges, the House Committee on Elections studied the growing problem of compensating, recruiting, retaining, and educating a qualified pool of election workers. Testimony before the committee revealed low wages as one of the major obstacles to recruitment and retention of election workers. CSHB 2756 provides for a training program for election officers and raises the maximum hourly compensation of those who attend. The bill also increases candidate filing fees to cover the costs of this increased compensation.

### **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**

CSHB 2756 amends the Election Code by requiring the secretary of state to adopt standards of training in election law and procedure for presiding or alternate election judges (training standards), to develop materials for a standardized curriculum for that training, and to distribute those materials. The bill authorizes the training standards to include required attendance at appropriate training programs or the passage of an examination at the end of a training program. The bill deletes provisions that authorize the governing body of a political subdivision that holds elections or the county executive committee of a political party that holds primary elections to adopt standards for training election workers and to require that a person meet these standards before appointment or service as an election judge.

The bill provides an exception to the maximum hourly compensation for election judges or clerks, for a primary or runoff primary election, for election officers who attended a training program. The bill provides that the maximum hourly compensation for election officers who attended a training program is \$7. The bill provides that an election judge, early voting clerk, or deputy early voting clerk in charge of an early voting polling place is entitled to compensation for attending a training program at an hourly rate not to exceed \$7.

The bill authorizes the governing body of a political subdivision other than a county, and requires the county executive committee of a political party, to provide training for its election officers using the standardized training program and materials developed and provided by the secretary of state, rather than providing training generally for its election officers. The bill requires the county clerk to provide one or more sessions of training using the secretary of state's standardized training program and materials for certain election judges and clerks, rather than providing training generally.

The bill authorizes the governing body of a political subdivision to appropriate funds to compensate election workers for attending a training program.

The bill increases the filing fees for candidates for nomination in the general primary election for certain

federal, state, and local offices.

The bill repeals provisions authorizing the secretary of state to deny payment of state funds to a county executive committee for the purpose of training election judges and to limit the amount of payment made.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2003.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE**

CSHB 2756 modifies the original by adding provisions relating to the creation of a standardized training program by the secretary of state for the training of election officers and by deleting provisions authorizing political subdivisions to adopt and use their own training programs.

The substitute modifies the original by changing the caption to reflect the addition of provisions relating to the standardized election training program.

The substitute modifies the original by providing the minimum, rather than maximum, hourly rate for election officers for a primary or runoff primary election.