

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
78R644 ATP-D

S.J.R. 29
By: Madla
Intergovernmental Relations
3/5/2003
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

A study conducted by the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations revealed certain difficulties that emergency service districts (ESDs) encounter in trying to provide fire prevention and emergency medical services at the current maximum tax rate of ten cents. Approximately 47 percent of ESDs have reached this maximum tax rate, in part because of post-September 11, 2001, training, and urban counties report even greater difficulty in providing services at the current tax rate. In addition, rural districts do not have local economies that allow for improvement of services without additional funding avenues. As proposed, S.J.R. 29 increases the maximum tax rate for ESDs to twenty cents on the one hundred dollars property valuation, if approved by qualified local voters.

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 Section 48-e, Article III, Texas Constitution, as follows:

Sec. 48-e. Authorizes laws to be enacted to provide for the establishment and creation of special districts to provide emergency and fire prevention services and to authorize the commissioners courts of participating counties to levy a tax on the ad valorem property situated in said districts not to exceed 20, rather than ten, cents on the one hundred dollars valuation for the support thereof; provided that no tax shall be levied in support of said districts until approved by a vote of the qualified voters residing therein, and no tax may be increased except as provided by general law. Authorizes such a district to provide emergency medical services, emergency ambulance services, rural fire prevention and control services, or other emergency services authorized by the Legislature.

SECTION 2. Requires this proposed constitutional amendment to be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 4, 2003. Requires the ballot to be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The constitutional amendment to increase the maximum tax rate that may be imposed on property in an emergency services district if approved by the voters of the district."