

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2414
By: Keffer, Jim
Judiciary
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, Texas statutes allows for the sharing of a jury panel or pool only in counties with two or more district courts. Separate provisions provide a method for organizing and utilizing the jury pool in a county with two district courts and in counties with three or more district courts. In counties where Section 62.017, Government Code applies, the judges may approve the panel for use in all courts in the county.

Many counties have one district court and a county court-at-law, especially in rural areas of Texas. Section 62.017 does not apply to these counties, and therefore, each court in the county is required to call its own jury panel or pool. This results in an inconvenience to the public and an expense to the county.

HB 2414 will make it possible for counties to better utilize our jury pools.

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

The bill adds county courts at law to the courts whose juries are drawn from the wheel in the presence of the district judge. Sec. 62.004(a) Government Code.

The bill adds a new Section 62.0175 to the Government Code, which creates a system for selection and sharing of jurors on a general panel in counties with a single district court and a single county court at law with overlapping jurisdiction.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Immediately on receipt of required vote, otherwise September 1, 2005