

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2593
By: Baxter
Government Reform
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In August 2000, Texas launched its official e-government Web site for state and local government business, TexasOnline. Demand for TexasOnline's services has been great. However, questions have arisen concerning whether and how certain transactions can be conducted using TexasOnline. C.S.H.B. 2593 addresses these concerns.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Public Safety in SECTION 9 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2593 authorizes state agencies or local governments to charge fees for the use of TexasOnline under Subchapter I of the Government Code, and sets forth the circumstances under which a fee may be charged. The bill provides for the use of any method to send and receive documents and required payments. C.S.H.B. 2593 clarifies that the TexasOnline Authority cannot establish, nor an Occupational Licensing entity approve, the payment of subscription fees for a service before that service is available on TexasOnline. C.S.H.B. 2593 strikes the word "division" with respect to TexasOnline's organizational status within the Department of Information Resources and makes conforming changes. C.S.H.B. 2593 requires training for TexasOnline authority members and sets forth requirements for such training. The bill clarifies that the authority shall develop project pricing policies. C.S.H.B. 2593 requires the authority to set fees that may be charged for a transaction that uses the project, and sets forth parameters for the setting and charging of fees. The bill also sets forth requirements for the collection and forwarding of fees charged to use the project. C.S.H.B. 2593 allows the Department of Public Safety to adopt rules to require an inspection station to use TexasOnline for certain purposes as required by the department. Finally, the bill repeals certain sections of the Government Code and Acts of the 77th Legislature, Regular Session, 2001.

EFFECTIVE DATE

The Act takes immediate effect upon receiving the necessary number of votes; otherwise the effective date is September 1, 2005.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute:

- Deletes the amendment to Section 2054.111 (g), Government Code;
- Deletes the amendment to 2054.242 (d) and further amends (e) to provide that the TexasOnline Authority will not establish, and a licensing entity will not approve, a subscription fee before the service for which the fee is charged is available online;
- Adds section 2054.273(a) and then deletes sections 2054.274 and 2054.275 of the Government Code from the original;
- Provides that the Texas Department of Public Safety may adopt rules regarding inspection stations and inspection certificates and the reporting of information to the department; and
- Repeals the provisions creating and relating to the TexasOnline Division of the Department of Information Resources, and makes applicable conforming changes.