

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 371
By: Dukes
Judiciary
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Class C misdemeanors make up a significant portion of the criminal offenses processed each year in Texas courts. This bill authorizes a study to explore potential decriminalization of certain offenses and the possible consequences.

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 instructs the Office of Court Administration to conduct a study of the feasibility, efficiency and potential cost savings of converting Class C misdemeanors into civil violations. The office is required to examine which offenses are appropriate for conversion and which civil collections procedures involving judicial oversight could be used in connection with such civil infractions. The office is directed to consult with certain persons and entities for input. The deadline for filing the report is October 1, 2008.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute changes the original bill to require, as opposed to permit, the Office of Court Administration to consult with various constituencies, and includes justices of the peace on this list.