

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 873  
By: Turner  
Urban Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, police departments across the state are experiencing problems in recruiting qualified and eligible police cadets. This is causing a growing crisis among Texas' larger cities in providing an adequate number of law enforcement officers to address the public safety needs of cities.

For cities with 1.5 million or more in population, applicants for beginning positions in police departments must be 21 years old; must have served in the United States' armed forces and received an honorable discharge; or must have earned 60 hours of college credit.

House Bill No. 873 would allow cities with a population of 1.5 million or more to hire police officers with previous law enforcement experience in lieu of 60 hours of college credit. This change would permit cities such as Houston to hire police officers for "modified lateral entry classes" thereby expanding the pool of available applicants for the police academy.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the opinion of the committee that this bill does not grants additional rulemaking authority to any State officer, department, agency or institution.

### **SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1: Would amends Section 143.105, Local Government Code by adding a provision for eligibility for beginning positions in police departments by providing that a person must be at least 21 years of age at the end of the probationary period and have served in the United States' armed forces and received an honorable discharge; earned at least 60 hours' credit in any area of study at an accredited college or university; or been employed full-time for at least five years as a peace officer and licensed by the Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education or an acceptable licensing entity in another state that has law enforcement office licensing requirements substantially equivalent to those of Chapter 1701, Occupations Code.

SECTION 2: Would set September 1, 2007, as the bill's effective date.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2007.