

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 339
By: Ellis
Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There is a need to speed up the pre-employment process for applicants to certain police departments and to get more officers on the street in a timely fashion. The practice of giving the civil service examination prior to admission into a police training academy is a burden on the resources of police departments because many people who take the examination fail at a later portion in the application process.

As proposed, S.B. 339 authorizes a police department in a municipality with a population of 1.5 million or more to administer the entrance examination after the examinees are admitted to a police officer training academy but before the examinees graduate from the academy. This bill also provides guidelines as to when and where the examination is to be given.

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 143.025, Local Government Code, by adding Subsection (k), to provide that this section (Entrance Examination) does not apply to a municipality with a population of 1.5 million or more.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter G, Chapter 143, Local Government Code, by adding Section 143.1041, as follows:

Sec. 143.1041. ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR BEGINNING PEACE OFFICER POSITION IN POLICE DEPARTMENT. (a) Defines "police officer training academy."

(b) Requires the Fire Fighters' and Police Officers' Civil Service Commission (commission) to provide for open, competitive, and free entrance examinations to provide eligibility lists for beginning peace officer positions. Sets forth the persons to which the examinations are open.

(c) Requires the examination to be administered to examinees after admission to a police officer training academy but before graduation.

(d) Authorizes an eligibility list for a beginning peace officer position to only be created as a result of the examination. Provides general content and administration guidelines for the examination. Prohibits a person from being appointed to the police department unless he or she has taken the examination.

(e) Prohibits the examination from being administered unless at least one other examinee taking the examination is present.

(f) Sets forth specific requirements relating to the administration of the examination, including the time, location, and procedures thereof.

(g) Requires that five points be added to the examination score of a person who served in the United States armed forces, received an honorable discharge from that service, and made a passing grade on the examination.

(h) Sets forth the procedure by which the examination grade is to be determined. Provides that the minimum passing grade on the examination is 70 percent, and that an examinee must pass the examination to be placed on an eligibility list.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2007.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.