

House Bill 3199
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 1. Subtitle B, Title 2, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 35 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 35. JUDICIAL COMPENSATION COMMISSIONS
SUBCHAPTER A. ORGANIZATION

Sec. 35.001. DEFINITION. In this chapter, "commission" means the Judicial Compensation Commission.

Sec. 35.002. MEMBERSHIP; TERMS. The commission consists of nine members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Members serve for staggered terms of six years with the terms of three members expiring February 1 of each odd-numbered year.

Sec. 35.003. VACANCY. In the event of a vacancy, the governor shall appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired portion of the term.

Sec. 35.004. PRESIDING OFFICER. The governor shall designate a member of the commission as the presiding officer of the commission to serve in that capacity at the will of the governor. The presiding officer may vote on all matters before the commission.

Sec. 35.005. QUALIFICATIONS. (a) Each member must be a registered voter of the state.

(b) A member of the commission may not hold any other public office or be an employee of any state department, agency, board, or commission during the member's tenure on the commission.

(c) A person may not be a member of the commission or

SENATE VERSION

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Sec. 35.002. MEMBERSHIP; TERMS. (a) The commission consists of nine members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate.

(b) No more than three members serving on the commission may be licensed to practice law in this state.

(c) Members serve for staggered terms of six years with the terms of three members expiring February 1 of each odd-numbered year.

Sec. 35.003. VACANCY. In the event of a vacancy, the governor shall appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired portion of the term.

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 3199
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

act as the general counsel to the commission if the person is required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 because of the person's activities for compensation on behalf of a profession related to the operation of the commission.

(d) Appointments to the commission shall be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointees.

Sec. 35.006. REMOVAL. (a) It is a ground for removal from the commission that a member:

(1) does not have at the time of appointment the qualification required by Section 35.005(a);

(2) does not maintain during service on the commission the qualification required by Section 35.005(a);

(3) violates the prohibition established by Section 35.005(b);

(4) is ineligible for membership under Section 35.005(c);

(5) cannot, because of illness or disability, discharge the member's duties for a substantial part of the member's term; or

(6) is absent from more than half of the regularly scheduled meetings that the member is eligible to attend during a calendar year without an excuse approved by a majority vote of the commission.

(b) The validity of an action of the commission is not affected by the fact that it is taken when a ground for removal of a commission member exists.

Sec. 35.007. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. (a) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial

SENATE VERSION

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 3199
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

System shall provide administrative support for the commission. The commission is entitled to receive staff support, meeting facilities, temporary work facilities, including computer, telephone, reproduction, and facsimile equipment, available data, and other resources from the Office of Court Administration as necessary to carry out the commission's powers and duties.

(b) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall grant all reasonable requests for staff support and resources under this section.

Sec. 35.008. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. (a) A member of the commission may not receive compensation for the member's service on the commission.

(b) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall reimburse a member for all actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the exercise of powers and performance of duties under this chapter.

(c) A member shall follow the reimbursement procedures of the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.

[Sections 35.009-35.100 reserved for expansion]

SUBCHAPTER B. POWERS AND DUTIES

Sec. 35.101. MEETINGS. The commission shall meet at the call of the presiding officer or at the request of a majority of the members.

Sec. 35.102. BIENNIAL REPORTS. (a) Not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, the commission shall make a biennial report to the legislature. In the report, the commission shall

SENATE VERSION

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(b) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall grant all reasonable requests for staff support and resources under this section.

Sec. 35.008. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. (a) A member of the commission may not receive compensation for the member's service on the commission.

(b) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall reimburse a member for all actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the exercise of powers and performance of duties under this chapter.

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 3199
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

recommend the proper salaries to be paid by the state for all justices and judges of the supreme court, the court of criminal appeals, the courts of appeals, and the district courts.

(b) In recommending the proper salaries for all justices and judges of the supreme court, the court of criminal appeals, the courts of appeals, and the district courts, the commission shall consider the following factors:

(1) the skill and experience required of the particular judgeship at issue;

(2) the time required of the particular judgeship at issue;

(3) the value of compensable service performed by justices and judges, as determined by reference to judicial compensation in other states and the federal government;

(4) the value of comparable service performed in the private sector, including private judging, arbitration, and mediation;

(5) the compensation of attorneys in the private sector;

(6) the cost of living and changes in the cost of living;

(7) the compensation from the state presently received by other public officials in the state, including:

(A) state constitutional officeholders;

(B) deans, presidents, and chancellors of the public university systems;

(C) district attorneys; and

(D) chiefs of police, county attorneys, and city attorneys in major metropolitan areas for which that information is readily available;

(8) other factors that are normally or traditionally taken

SENATE VERSION

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(A) state constitutional officeholders;

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 3199
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

into consideration in the determination of judicial compensation; and

(9) most importantly, the level of overall compensation adequate to attract the most highly qualified individuals in the state, from a diversity of life and professional experiences, to serve in the judiciary without unreasonable economic hardship and with judicial independence unaffected by financial concerns.

SECTION 2. In appointing the initial members of the Judicial Compensation Commission, the governor shall appoint three persons to terms expiring February 1, 2009, three persons to terms expiring February 1, 2011, and three persons to terms expiring February 1, 2013.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

SENATE VERSION

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