

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1615
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Agriculture & Livestock
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The need for quality veterinary services is important to pet owners. Provisions of the Veterinary Licensing Act, regulating the floor plan of a veterinary clinic that leases space from a mercantile establishment, require the clinic to open onto a public street, hall, lobby, corridor, or other public thoroughfare other than the aisle of the mercantile establishment. An exemption to this requirement was passed in 1999 that allowed existing veterinary clinics that were operating before January 1, 1993, to continue doing business in retail establishments.

C.S.H.B. 1615 extends that exemption to veterinary clinics that are operating in space that was opened, designed, or engineered as the location for a specific facility before December 31, 2009, to preserve and promote the availability of veterinary clinic services.

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

C.S.H.B. 1615 amends the Occupations Code to make restrictions concerning a patient's entrance, for the practice of a veterinarian who leases space from a mercantile establishment, inapplicable to the practice of a veterinarian or the legal successor of the practice if the practice is operating in space that was opened, designed, or engineered as the location for a specific facility before December 31, 2009, rather than making such restrictions inapplicable to the practice of a veterinarian or the legal successor of the practice if the practice is operating in a space that was open and operating before January 1, 1993.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 1615 differs from the original by making restrictions relating to a patient's entrance for the practice of a veterinarian who leases space from a mercantile establishment inapplicable to a practice operating in space that was opened, designed, or engineered as the location for a specific facility before December 31, 2009, rather than a practice operating in space that was open and operating before January 1, 1993, as in the original.