

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3244
By: Riddle
Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, certain sex offenders in Texas are required to register with the chief of police in the municipality where the offender is living or with the sheriff of the county where the offender is living. Some larger counties possess many small municipalities, and as a result, the information on sex offenders in these counties is spread throughout several different agencies. This bill allows a county to have all information on sex offenders registered within a county at a single location, rather than relying on information kept by several different agencies.

H.B. 3244 authorizes a county commissioners court in a county with a population over 100,000 to create a centralized registration authority where all registered sex offenders are required to register.

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

H.B. 3244 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to authorize the commissioners court in a county with a population of 100,000 or more to designate the office of the sheriff of the county or, through interlocal agreement, to designate the office of a chief of police of a municipality in that county to serve as a mandatory countywide registration location for persons required to register as sex offenders. The bill requires a sex offender registrant to register or verify registration only with the centralized registration authority for the county, regardless of whether the person resides in any municipality located in that county. The bill requires the centralized registration authority, not later than the third day after the date the person registers or verifies registration with that authority, if the person resides in a municipality and the local law enforcement authority in the municipality does not serve as the person's centralized registration authority, to provide notice to the local law enforcement authority in that municipality of the person's registration or verification of registration with the centralized registration authority.

H.B. 3244 provides that, if a sex offender registrant resides in, or resides in another state but works or attends school in a Texas county with a centralized registration authority, the central registration authority serves as that person's primary registration authority, regardless of whether the person resides, works, or attends school, as applicable, in any municipality in that county. The bill adds to the definition of "local law enforcement authority," for purposes of the Sex Offender Registration Program, a centralized registration authority and defines "centralized registration authority."

EFFECTIVE DATE

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