

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 379
By: Carona
Border & Intergovernmental Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Over the past two years, the international border between Texas and United Mexican States has become an increasingly violent and dangerous place due mainly to Mexican drug cartels that have become more powerful and brazen. These Mexican cartels use existing street gangs in Texas to extend their reach into the United States and to sell narcotics.

S.B. 379 requires the Texas Fusion Center to submit annually to the governor and the legislature a report regarding criminal street gangs and gang-related crime. The bill sets forth the information required to be included in the report

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

S.B. 379 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Fusion Center to annually submit to the governor and the legislature a report regarding criminal street gangs and gang-related crime. The bill requires the report to include: an evaluation of the threat that criminal street gangs and gang-related crime pose to communities in Texas that are at or near the international border between Texas and the United Mexican States; an evaluation of the threat that criminal street gangs and gang-related crime occurring at or near the border pose to other areas of Texas; identification of any law enforcement strategies in Texas or another jurisdiction that have been effective in preventing the growth or proliferation of criminal street gangs or gang-related crime; and recommendations on actions that may be taken to prevent criminal street gangs from committing human trafficking offenses, reduce criminal street gang violence and prevent the growth or proliferation of criminal street gangs throughout Texas with specific recommendations concerning reduction of criminal street gang violence at or near the border, and ensure that law enforcement personnel receive the necessary training and education to effectively deal with the problems created by criminal street gangs and gang-related crime. The bill requires a state criminal justice or juvenile justice agency to provide information relating to criminal street gangs and gang-related crime to the Texas Fusion Center on request. The bill prohibits the report from containing any information that is considered sensitive intelligence information by the providing agency or could jeopardize an ongoing investigation being conducted by that agency. The bill requires the Texas Fusion Center to submit the first annual report not later than September 1, 2010.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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