

By: Whitmire

S.B. No. 1529

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to criminal asset forfeiture, the disposition of proceeds
3 and property from criminal asset forfeiture, and accountability for
4 that disposition; providing civil penalties.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Subsection (d), Article 59.03, Code of Criminal
7 Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

8 (d) A person in the possession of property at the time a
9 peace officer seizes the property under this chapter may at the time
10 of seizure assert the person's interest in or right to the property.
11 Any peace officer, including the [A] peace officer who seizes the
12 property, [under this chapter] may not [at the time of seizure]
13 request, require, or in any manner induce any person, including a
14 person who asserts an interest in or right to the property [seized],
15 to execute a document purporting to waive the person's interest in
16 or rights to [the] property seized under this chapter.

17 SECTION 2. Article 59.03, Code of Criminal Procedure, is
18 amended by adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

19 (e) At any time before notice is filed under Article
20 59.04(b), an attorney representing the state may not request,
21 require, or in any manner induce any person, including a person who
22 asserts an interest in or right to property seized under this
23 chapter, to execute a document purporting to waive the person's
24 interest in or rights to the property.

1 SECTION 3. Article 59.06, Code of Criminal Procedure, is
2 amended by adding Subsections (c-1), (d-1), and (d-2) and amending
3 Subsections (d) and (g) to read as follows:

4 (c-1) Any postjudgment interest from money, securities,
5 negotiable instruments, stocks or bonds, or things of value, or
6 proceeds from the sale of those items, that are deposited in an
7 interest-bearing bank account under Subsection (c) shall be used
8 for the same purpose as the principal.

9 (d) Proceeds awarded under this chapter to a law enforcement
10 agency or to the attorney representing the state may be spent by the
11 agency or the attorney after a budget for the expenditure of the
12 proceeds has been submitted to the commissioners court or governing
13 body of the municipality. The budget must be detailed and clearly
14 list and define the categories of expenditures, but may not list
15 details that would endanger the security of an investigation or
16 prosecution. Expenditures are subject to the audit and enforcement
17 provisions established under this chapter [~~article~~]. A
18 commissioners court or governing body of a municipality may not use
19 the existence of an award to offset or decrease total salaries,
20 expenses, and allowances that the agency or the attorney receives
21 from the commissioners court or governing body at or after the time
22 the proceeds are awarded.

23 (d-1) The head of a law enforcement [~~the~~] agency or an
24 attorney representing the state may not use proceeds or property
25 received under this chapter to:

26 (1) contribute to a political campaign;

27 (2) make a donation to any entity, except as provided

1 by Subsection (d-2);

2 (3) pay expenses related to the training or education
3 of any member of the judiciary;

4 (4) purchase alcoholic beverages;

5 (5) make any expenditure not previously approved by
6 the commissioners court or governing body of the municipality, as
7 applicable, if the head of a law enforcement agency or attorney
8 representing the state holds an elective office and:

9 (A) the deadline for filing an application for a
10 place on the ballot as a candidate for reelection to that office in
11 the general primary election or, for an office elected at a
12 nonpartisan election, in the general election has passed and the
13 person did not file an application for a place on that ballot; or

14 (B) during the person's current term of office,
15 the person was a candidate in a primary, general, or runoff election
16 for reelection to that office and was not the prevailing candidate
17 in that election; or

18 (6) [~~the existence of an award to~~] increase a salary,
19 expense, or allowance for an employee of the law enforcement agency
20 or attorney representing the state [~~or agency~~] who is budgeted by
21 the commissioners court or governing body of the municipality
22 unless the commissioners court or governing body first approves the
23 increase [~~expenditure~~].

24 (d-2) The head of a law enforcement agency or an attorney
25 representing the state may use as an official purpose of the agency
26 or attorney proceeds or property received under this chapter to
27 make a donation to an entity that assists in:

1 (1) the detection, investigation, or prosecution of:

2 (A) criminal offenses; or

3 (B) instances of abuse, as defined by Section
4 261.001, Family Code;

5 (2) the provision of:

6 (A) mental health, drug, or rehabilitation
7 services; or

8 (B) services for victims or witnesses of criminal
9 offenses or instances of abuse described by Subdivision (1); or

10 (3) the provision of training or education related to
11 duties or services described by Subdivision (1) or (2), subject to
12 any generally applicable restrictions on travel expenses
13 established by the commissioners court or governing body of the
14 municipality, as applicable.

15 (g)(1) All law enforcement agencies and attorneys
16 representing the state who receive proceeds or property under this
17 chapter shall account for the seizure, forfeiture, receipt, and
18 specific expenditure of all the ~~such~~ proceeds and property in an
19 audit, which is to be performed annually by the commissioners court
20 or governing body of a municipality, as appropriate. The annual
21 period of the audit for a law enforcement agency is the fiscal year
22 of the appropriate county or municipality and the annual period for
23 an attorney representing the state is the state fiscal year. The
24 audit must ~~shall~~ be completed on a form provided by the attorney
25 general and must include a detailed report and explanation of all
26 expenditures, including salaries and overtime pay, officer
27 training, investigative equipment and supplies, and other items.

1 Certified copies of the audit shall be delivered by the law
2 enforcement agency or attorney representing the state to [~~the~~
3 ~~comptroller's office and~~] the attorney general not later than the
4 60th day after the date on which the annual period that is the
5 subject of the audit ends.

6 (2) If a copy of the audit is not delivered to the
7 attorney general within the period required by Subdivision (1),
8 within five days after the end of the period the attorney general
9 shall notify the law enforcement agency or the attorney
10 representing the state of that fact. On a showing of good cause,
11 the attorney general may grant an extension permitting the agency
12 or attorney to deliver a copy of the audit after the period required
13 by Subdivision (1) and before the 76th day after the date on which
14 the annual period that is the subject of the audit ends. If the law
15 enforcement agency or the attorney representing the state fails to
16 establish good cause for not delivering the copy of the audit within
17 the period required by Subdivision (1) or fails to deliver a copy of
18 an audit within the extension period, the attorney general shall
19 notify the comptroller of that fact.

20 (3) On notice under Subdivision (2) [~~this~~
21 ~~subdivision~~], the comptroller shall perform the audit otherwise
22 required by Subdivision (1). At the conclusion of the audit, the
23 comptroller shall forward a copy of the audit to the attorney
24 general. The law enforcement agency or attorney representing the
25 state is liable to the comptroller for the costs of the comptroller
26 in performing the audit.

27 SECTION 4. Chapter 59, Code of Criminal Procedure, is

1 amended by adding Articles 59.061 and 59.062 to read as follows:

2 Art. 59.061. AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS. (a) The state
3 auditor may at any time perform an audit or conduct an
4 investigation, in accordance with this article and Chapter 321,
5 Government Code, related to the seizure, forfeiture, receipt, and
6 specific expenditure of proceeds and property received under this
7 chapter.

8 (b) The state auditor is entitled at any time to access any
9 book, account, voucher, confidential or nonconfidential report, or
10 other record of information, including electronic data, maintained
11 under Article 59.06, except that if the release of the applicable
12 information is restricted under state or federal law, the state
13 auditor may access the information only with the approval of a court
14 or federal administrative agency, as appropriate.

15 (c) If the results of an audit or investigation under this
16 article indicate that a law enforcement agency or attorney
17 representing the state has violated or is violating a provision of
18 this chapter relating to the disposition of proceeds or property
19 received under this chapter, the state auditor shall promptly
20 notify the attorney general for the purpose of initiating
21 appropriate enforcement proceedings under Article 59.062.

22 Art. 59.062. ENFORCEMENT. (a) In the name of the state,
23 the attorney general may institute in a district court in Travis
24 County or in a county served by the law enforcement agency or
25 attorney representing the state, as applicable, a suit for
26 injunctive relief, to recover a civil penalty, or for both
27 injunctive relief and a civil penalty if the results of an audit or

1 investigation under this chapter indicate that the law enforcement
2 agency or attorney representing the state has violated or is
3 violating a provision of this chapter relating to the disposition
4 of proceeds or property received under this chapter.

5 (b) On application for injunctive relief and a finding that
6 the law enforcement agency or attorney representing the state is
7 violating a provision of this chapter relating to the disposition
8 of proceeds or property received under this chapter, the district
9 court shall grant the injunctive relief the facts may warrant,
10 without requirement for bond.

11 (c) A law enforcement agency or attorney representing the
12 state who commits a violation described by Subsection (a) is liable
13 to the state for a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$100,000
14 as determined by the district court to be appropriate for the nature
15 and seriousness of the violation. In determining an appropriate
16 penalty for the violation, the court shall consider:

17 (1) any previous violations committed by the agency or
18 attorney;

19 (2) the seriousness of the violation, including the
20 nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation;

21 (3) the demonstrated good faith of the agency or
22 attorney; and

23 (4) the amount necessary to deter future violations.

24 (d) If the attorney general brings a suit under this article
25 and an injunction is granted or a civil penalty is imposed, the
26 attorney general may recover reasonable expenses, court costs,
27 investigative costs, and attorney's fees.

1 (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, a
2 law enforcement agency or attorney representing the state ordered
3 to pay a civil penalty, expense, cost, or fee under this article
4 shall make the payment out of money available in any fund
5 established by the agency or attorney, as applicable, for the
6 purpose of administering proceeds or property received under this
7 chapter. If sufficient money is not available to make payment in
8 full at the time the court enters an order requiring payment, the
9 agency or attorney shall continue to make payments out of money
10 available in any fund described by this subsection until the
11 payment is made in full.

12 (f) A civil penalty collected under this article shall be
13 deposited to the credit of the drug court account in the general
14 revenue fund to help fund drug court programs established under
15 Chapter 469, Health and Safety Code.

16 SECTION 5. The changes in law made by this Act in amending
17 Article 59.03, Code of Criminal Procedure, apply only to property
18 seized on or after the effective date of this Act. Property seized
19 before the effective date of this Act is covered by the law in
20 effect when the property was seized, and the former law is continued
21 in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this section, property
22 was seized before the effective date of this Act if any portion of
23 the property was seized before that date.

24 SECTION 6. Except as provided by Section 7 of this Act, the
25 changes in law made by this Act in amending Article 59.06, Code of
26 Criminal Procedure, apply to the disposition or use, on or after the
27 effective date of this Act, of proceeds or property received by a

1 law enforcement agency or attorney representing the state under
2 Chapter 59, Code of Criminal Procedure, regardless of whether the
3 receipt of the proceeds or property occurred before, on, or after
4 the effective date of this Act.

5 SECTION 7. The changes in law made by this Act in amending
6 Subsection (g), Article 59.06, Code of Criminal Procedure, and
7 adding Articles 59.061 and 59.062, Code of Criminal Procedure,
8 apply to any audit performed on or after the effective date of this
9 Act.

10 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.