

Amend CSHB 1616 (house committee printing) by adding the following appropriately numbered SECTIONS to the bill and renumbering subsequent SECTIONS of the bill accordingly:

SECTION _____. Subchapter C, Chapter 571, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 571.080 and 571.081 to read as follows:

Sec. 571.080. ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN FILERS. The commission, using existing resources, must provide a service that enables a candidate or officeholder required to file a report with the commission to speak to commission staff to assist the person in preparing and filing the report. This service must be continuously available beginning 16 hours before the time and date of a deadline for filing a report with the commission and ending on the deadline for filing the report.

Sec. 571.081. AVAILABILITY OF DIRECT TELEPHONE NUMBER OF COMMISSION STAFF TO CERTAIN FILERS. An employee of the commission shall on request provide the employee's direct telephone number to a candidate or officeholder required to file a report with the commission.

SECTION _____. Section 571.123(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) After a complaint is filed, the commission shall immediately attempt to contact and notify the respondent of the complaint by telephone or electronic mail. Not later than the fifth business day after the date a complaint is filed, the commission shall send written notice to the complainant and the respondent. The written notice to the complainant and the respondent must:

(1) state whether the complaint complies with the form requirements of Section 571.122;

(2) if the respondent is a candidate or officeholder, state the procedure by which the respondent may designate an agent with whom commission staff may discuss the complaint;

(3) if the respondent is a candidate or officeholder, state that the respondent may request the direct telephone number of the commission staff member who will perform the processing of the complaint against the respondent; and

(4) [~~(2)~~] if applicable, include the information required by Section 571.124(e).

SECTION _____. Subchapter E, Chapter 571, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 571.1231 and 571.1232 to read as follows:

Sec. 571.1231. DESIGNATION OF AGENT BY CERTAIN RESPONDENTS.

(a) This section applies only to a respondent who is a candidate or officeholder.

(b) A respondent to a complaint filed against the respondent may by writing submitted to the commission designate an agent with whom the commission staff may communicate regarding the complaint.

(c) For purposes of this subchapter, including Section 571.140, communications with the respondent's agent designated under this section are considered communications with the respondent.

Sec. 571.1232. PROVISION OF TELEPHONE NUMBER TO CERTAIN RESPONDENTS. (a) This section applies only to a respondent who is a candidate or officeholder.

(b) On request, the commission shall provide to a respondent the direct telephone number of the commission staff member who will perform the processing of the complaint against the respondent.