

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 904  
By: Thompson  
Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Between 6,000 and 8,000 citizens move through the municipal courts of Texas on a daily basis. Security for civilians and employees is not a precaution, it is a necessity. Municipal courts process payment amounts as high as \$200,000 daily from defendant fines and fees collected. The presence of such large sums of money requires tight building security to prevent the risk of theft and also to ensure that such activities remain inconspicuous to court visitors. Maintaining secure areas is vital. Currently, many municipal courts face funding shortages and obtaining necessary security features has become increasingly difficult. The security fee has not been raised since the creation of the security fund over 15 years ago, yet the cost to purchase and maintain necessary security equipment has greatly increased. Additional funding from an increased security fee can assist municipal courts in obtaining increased security such as additional on-site security, panic buttons, surveillance cameras, keyless entry systems, sufficient staffing of municipal court security officers in the courtrooms, and security guards at entry checkpoints.

### **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. 904 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to increase from \$3 to \$4 the security fee a governing body of a municipality is authorized to require a defendant to pay on conviction of a misdemeanor offense in a municipal court.

H.B. 904 amends the Government Code to make a conforming change. The bill makes state law regarding the implementation of new or amended court costs and fees inapplicable to the imposition and change in the amount of the court cost assessed under the bill's provisions.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011.