

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1580
By: Brown
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Many state-funded organizations currently use untrained or minimally trained personnel to perform delicate repairs on highly sophisticated steam sterilization equipment. These pressurized devices use both steam and pressure to sterilize equipment, samples, and biological waste. Because the vessels are pressurized and use steam, there is inherent danger in any repair operation to be performed on such devices. Even the briefest incidental exposure to the steam could result in blistering burns. Using untrained individuals to work on such equipment only increases the risk of such exposure by increasing the likelihood of a critical valve being placed incorrectly into a sterilizer or improper use of other components, with devastating consequences.

H.B. 1580 seeks to minimize the risk of such events by establishing training and certification requirements for individuals who work on pressure vessels owned by the state or used by the state.

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. 1580 amends the Health and Safety Code to prohibit, on or after October 1, 2011, an employee or independent contractor of a state agency or of a person who has contracted with a state agency to perform pressure vessel service work from working on a pressure vessel owned or used by the agency unless the individual performing the service work is trained and certified to perform service work on the type of pressure vessel owned or used by the agency and the individual provides to the agency a copy of the certificate authorizing the individual to perform service work on that type of pressure vessel. The bill authorizes an individual for whom training and certification are required under this provision to obtain the training and certification from the manufacturer of a pressure vessel owned or used by the state agency; a manufacturer of a pressure vessel that is similar to the type of pressure vessel owned or used by the agency, as determined by the agency; or an accredited pressure vessel training school approved by the agency.

H.B. 1580 requires a state agency that has an employee or independent contractor of the agency perform service work on a pressure vessel owned or used by the agency or that contracts with a person for the performance of service work on the pressure vessel to retain in the agency's records, beginning on October 1, 2011, each certificate copy received by the agency under these provisions until the agency disposes of the pressure vessel. The bill defines "pressure vessel" and defines "state agency" to mean a board, commission, department, office, or other agency that is in the executive branch of state government and that was created by the Texas Constitution or a state statute, including an institution of higher education; the legislature or a legislative agency; and the supreme court, the court of criminal appeals, a court of appeals, the State Bar of Texas, or another state judicial agency.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.