

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3131
By: Geren
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, a state employee must submit a travel voucher to the comptroller of public accounts in order to be reimbursed for certain travel expenses incurred while conducting state business. Concerned parties assert that this requirement can present a safety hazard in situations where a Department of Public Safety employee provides protection for a statewide elected official or the official's family, due to the fact that the official or the official's family often travel to a particular area on multiple occasions.

H.B. 3131 seeks to provide for the confidentiality of certain travel vouchers submitted by peace officers assigned to a protective detail of an elected official of Texas or a member of the elected official's family and for public access to a summary of certain information in such a voucher.

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. 3131 amends the Government Code to make a voucher submitted or to be submitted by a state agency to the comptroller of public accounts requesting payment or reimbursement for travel expenses confidential and to prohibit such a voucher from being disclosed under state open records law if the voucher is submitted or is to be submitted for payment or reimbursement of a travel expense incurred by a peace officer who is assigned to provide protection for an elected official of Texas or a member of the elected official's family and the travel expense was incurred by the peace officer in providing protection for the elected official or family. The bill requires a state agency that submits such a voucher to provide to a person, on request, a summary of the amounts paid or reimbursed by the comptroller in response to the voucher and a summary of any goods and services acquired for which a travel expense is claimed under the voucher.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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