

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3255
By: Strama
Government Efficiency & Reform
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Office of the State Demographer compiles data about demographic and socioeconomic groups in Texas and works in conjunction with the Texas State Data Center to share such information with state policy makers and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The state demographer produces annual estimates and biennial projections of the state and counties by age, sex, and race/ethnicity. The projections are used extensively by public and private entities and are circulated by the Texas State Data Center. The current racial/ethnic groups included in the state demographer's estimates and projections are Anglo, Black, Hispanic, and Other. As other minority groups in Texas grow, interested parties note that it is critical that they have access to data concerning their communities.

There is concern that the state demographer currently does not have adequate statutory guidelines to determine which groups to include in such estimates and projections. H.B. 3255 seeks to meet this need by changing certain guidelines to encourage the state demographer to include information about a broad range of racial and ethnic groups in estimates and projections.

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. 3255 amends the Government Code to require the state demographer to adhere to current standards of practice when determining which racial or ethnic groups to include in estimates and projections and to provide, on request, information that justifies the omission of any particular racial or ethnic group from estimates and projections, including limitations of data and methodology.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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