

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 687  
By: Márquez  
County Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, the standing preliminary review committee of a county ethics commission in certain counties consists of three persons, including a review officer who is required to be a practicing attorney or former judge retained by the commission. Interested parties contend that finding an attorney or former judge outside the commission to serve as a review officer has been difficult and costs money. H.B. 687 seeks to address this issue by authorizing a member of the commission who is a practicing attorney or former judge to serve as a review officer and to set out provisions relating to the preliminary review of complaints filed with a county ethics commission.

### **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. 687 amends the Local Government Code, in provisions relating to a county ethics commission in a county that has a population of 800,000 or more, is located on the international border, and before September 1, 2009, had a county ethics board appointed by the commissioners court, to authorize a commission member to serve as the review officer of a standing preliminary review committee. The bill, for alleged Category One or Category Two violations, requires such a committee to set a matter for a preliminary review hearing to be held at the next committee hearing if the matter is not resolved by agreement between the committee and the respondent before the 30th day after the date the committee receives the respondent's response to certain notice of the complaint, rather than before the 30th day after the date the respondent receives such notice.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.