

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1222
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Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Water Safety Act provides for various measures, including criminal penalties, to protect public safety on Texas waterways. Under current law, venue for any alleged violation or offense under that act is restricted to the justice court or county court that has jurisdiction where the violation or offense occurred. Interested parties observe that some municipal police are equipped with citation forms or automated ticket writers that are connected to the municipal court system and which they are unable to use for violations or offenses under the Water Safety Act because of the venue restrictions. The parties contend that such restrictions create inefficiency and threaten the public interest in areas where municipal police are the primary means of enforcing water safety laws.

H.B. 1222 adds a municipal court as an authorized venue for such violations and offenses in an effort to make the system used to enforce water safety laws more closely resemble the efficient and effective system that has been implemented with regard to policing the roads and highways.

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. 1222 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to add as an authorized venue for an alleged violation or offense under the Water Safety Act the municipal court having jurisdiction where the violation or offense was committed.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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