

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1915
By: Cortez
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerned observers note that currently there is no ethics policy or training standard established specifically for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). These observers contend that a comprehensive ethics policy for CPRIT is needed because of the unique nature of the institute in providing large quantities of public money to private enterprises and given the recent controversy regarding the way in which the institute has handled grant funds. For this purpose, H.B. 1915 seeks to require the adoption and enforcement of an ethics policy by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas oversight committee.

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. 1915 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) Oversight Committee to adopt and enforce an ethics policy that provides standards of conduct relating to the operations of CPRIT in addition to any other requirements provided by law. The bill requires the oversight committee to adopt the policy not later than January 1, 2014. The bill requires the ethics policy to include provisions to address specified issues as applied to the operations of CPRIT and to oversight committee members, other committee members, and CPRIT employees.

H.B. 1915 requires the ethics policy to include provisions applicable to members of the oversight committee, the executive director, CPRIT employees, members of scientific research and prevention programs committees and other advisory committees, and any person who provides services to CPRIT relating to its operations. The bill requires the oversight committee to submit a copy of the proposed policy, amendment, or revision to the Texas Ethics Commission and the state auditor for review and comments within a specified time frame, and to consider any comments from the commission or state auditor before adopting the proposed policy. The bill requires the oversight committee to ensure that applicable provisions of the ethics policy are included in any contract under which a person provides services to CPRIT relating to its operations.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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