

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2604
By: Dale
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that a law enforcement officer must satisfy a greater number of requirements to obtain a concealed handgun license than a regular citizen. These parties assert that these requirements are superfluous as such an officer carries a handgun as part of the officer's normal duties. H.B. 2604 seeks to remove the hindrances to these officers obtaining a concealed handgun license.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Public Safety in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2604 amends the Government Code to remove a requirement that an applicant for a license to carry a concealed handgun who is licensed as a peace officer and is employed as a peace officer by a law enforcement agency, or a member of the Texas military forces, excluding Texas State Guard members who are serving in the Texas Legislature, submit to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) two complete sets of legible and classifiable fingerprints and a sworn statement of the head of the law enforcement agency employing the applicant that includes specified information concerning the applicant's qualifications and physical and mental fitness to carry a handgun. The bill instead requires an applicant who is a peace officer employed by a law enforcement agency to submit to DPS the name and rank of the applicant, a current copy of the applicant's peace officer license, and evidence of employment as a peace officer; requires DPS to adopt rules regarding the information required to be included in an application for a license submitted by a member of the Texas military forces, excluding Texas State Guard members who are serving in the Texas Legislature; and authorizes DPS to issue a concealed handgun license to an applicant who is a peace officer or a member of the Texas military forces if the applicant submits the required information or complies with the adopted rules, as applicable.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.