

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3512  
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General Investigating & Ethics  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Texas Ethics Commission recently underwent a Sunset Advisory Commission review, but the resultant legislation was vetoed by the governor. Interested parties contend that provisions in the law, administrative code, and commission advisory opinions have resulted in a need to clarify the conditions under which a person is required to register as a lobbyist, particularly with regard to the calculation of percentage of compensated time spent in lobby communications and whether goodwill conversations are considered lobby communications. H.B. 3512 seeks to address this need.

### **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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3512 amends the Government Code to establish that a person is not required to register as a lobbyist with the Texas Ethics Commission if the person spends not more than 26 hours, or another amount of time determined by the commission, for which the person is compensated or reimbursed during the calendar quarter engaging in activity, including preparatory activity as defined by the commission, to communicate directly with a member of the legislative or executive branch to influence legislation or administrative action, which includes establishing goodwill with the member for the purpose of later communicating with the member to influence legislation or administrative action. The bill establishes that a person who spends more than eight hours in a single day engaging in such direct communication activity is considered to have engaged in the activity for only eight hours during that day for purposes of the 26-hour, or other amount of time determined by the commission, threshold triggering the requirement to register as a lobbyist.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.