

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 27  
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Government Transparency & Operation  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested stakeholders explain that Texas law does not require live broadcast over the Internet of open conference call meetings of the governing board of an institution of higher education. Members of the public must be physically present in a board's conference room to access an open conference call meeting of the board, a requirement the stakeholders contend places an undue burden on members of the public who wish to access open conference call meetings. The stakeholders also contend that this situation is inconsistent with state law that requires online broadcast of face-to-face board of regents meetings that are open to the public. The goal of S.B. 27 is to increase transparency and public access to open conference call meetings of certain higher education entities.

### **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**

S.B. 27 amends the Government Code to include among the requirements for a telephone conference call meeting held by the governing board of an institution of higher education, the Board for Lease of University Lands, or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board the requirement that each part of such a meeting that is required to be open to the public be broadcast over the Internet in the manner prescribed by statutory provisions governing Internet broadcasts of open meetings. The bill specifies that the manner in which the required recording of each such meeting is to be made available to the public is in an online archive located on the website of the entity holding the meeting.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.