

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 459
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International Trade & Intergovernmental Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that Texas is one of the most diverse states in the United States. Given the state's rapidly growing population, these parties contend there is a need to recognize this diversity within the office of the governor. In an effort to meet such a need, S.B. 459 seeks to provide a means to advise the governor's office on initiatives that could help further the economic, social, legal, and political contributions of the state's diverse population.

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. 459 amends the Government Code to establish the nine-member Advisory Council on Cultural Affairs in the office of the governor to advise the office on furthering the economic, social, legal, and political contributions and equality of the Hispanic population of Texas. The bill establishes the composition of the council, with its members appointed not later than October 1, 2015, as follows: one ex officio member of the legislature appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives to serve a two-year term; one ex officio member of the legislature appointed by the lieutenant governor to serve a two-year term; and seven members appointed by the governor to serve four-year staggered terms, with either three or four members' terms expiring February 1 of each odd-numbered year. The bill requires the governor, in appointing the initial members of the council, to appoint three persons to terms expiring February 1, 2017, and four to terms expiring February 1, 2019. The bill requires the appointing officials, in making appointments to the council, to attempt to achieve geographic representation of the Hispanic population from all areas of Texas and requires the governor to designate the chair and vice chair of the council from among the council members. The bill requires the council to meet at least quarterly each fiscal year, authorizes the council to hold meetings by conference call, and does not entitle a council member to compensation or reimbursement of expenses incurred in performing council duties.

S.B. 459 sets out the duties of the council and requires the council to submit a report of the council's recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives not later than October 1 of each even-numbered year. The bill requires the council to include in the report recommendations about the status and funding of state programs designed to address the needs of the Hispanic population and recommendations about reforms, policies, and statutory changes to further the economic, social, legal, and political contributions

of Hispanics in Texas.

S.B. 459 exempts the council from statutory provisions regarding state agency advisory committees and requires state agencies, including institutions of higher education, and political subdivisions of the state to cooperate with the council to the greatest extent practicable to fully implement the council's statutory duties.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.