

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 627
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

This legislation codifies 25 years of Texas common law by providing journalists a privilege against litigation when they report on allegations brought by a whistleblower, so long as the defendant-media can establish that the underlying allegations: (1) were made, and (2) were accurately reported.

As proposed, S.B. 627 amends current law relating to certain publications that are privileged and not grounds for a libel action.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 73.002, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (c) and (d), as follows:

(b) Provides that this section applies to certain documentation, including publication of allegations made by a third party regarding matters of public concern, regardless of the truth or falsity of the allegations.

Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(c) Provides that this section does not abrogate or lessen any other defense, remedy, immunity, or privilege available under other constitutional, statutory, case, or common law or rule provisions.

(d) Requires that this section be construed liberally to effectuate its purpose and intent fully.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.