

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 214
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that recording and making available the proceedings of the highest civil and criminal courts in Texas will promote transparency and allow the public to evaluate the efficacy of Texas' judicial system. C.S.H.B. 214 seeks to increase transparency and public confidence in the courts by requiring the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to record each oral argument and public meeting of each court and subsequently to publish the recordings on the applicable court's website if the funds to do so are available.

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

C.S.H.B. 214 amends the Government Code to require the Supreme Court of Texas and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, if appropriated funds or donations are available in the amount necessary to cover the cost, to make a video recording or other electronic visual and audio recording of each oral argument and public meeting of the court and to post the recording on the court's website.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 214 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 22, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 22.303 to read as follows:

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 22, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 22.303 to read as follows:

85R 24575

17.109.611

Substitute Document Number: 85R 23213

Sec. 22.303. RECORDING OF CERTAIN COURT PROCEEDINGS.

The supreme court and the court of criminal appeals shall make a video recording or other electronic visual and audio recording of each oral argument and public meeting of the court and post the recording on the court's Internet website.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

Sec. 22.303. RECORDING OF CERTAIN COURT PROCEEDINGS. If appropriated funds or donations are available in the amount necessary to cover the cost, the supreme court and the court of criminal appeals shall make a video recording or other electronic visual and audio recording of each oral argument and public meeting of the court and post the recording on the court's Internet website.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.