

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R8340 YDB-F

S.B. 763
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is currently composed of 11 members and is shrinking to nine members by the time of the next governor appointments with the passage of S.B. 283, 83rd Legislature Regular Session, 2013. S.B. 763 addresses the problem of the lack of diversity and expertise on the board to address the various fields, including archeology, architecture, history, economic development, heritage tourism, public administration, and urban planning, all in which THC works.

The statute presently has no requirement for a particular background or occupation for the members of the board. Without such a background, THC's board largely defers to staff without the ability to adequately retort any assertions made by those professionals. Also, THC works on both rural and urban settings throughout the entire state. The nine member board would not have the size to be geographically available between the various regions of the state.

This legislation increases THC board size to 15 members, and requires that three members have a specific background--one member must be a professional archeologist, one must be a professional historian, and one must be a professional architect. The legislation requires the remaining members of THC represent the general public. The legislation also makes the restrictions to being appointed to the board enumerated in Subsections (b)(1-3) obligatory rather than advisory. Any costs (minimal travel expenses) are expected to be absorbed by THC without additional appropriations.

As proposed, S.B. 763 amends current law relating to the composition of the Texas Historical Commission.

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 442.002(b), Government Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that Texas Historical Commission (THC) is composed of 15 members, rather than nine members, appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Requires one member to be a professional archeologist, one to be a professional historian, and one to be a state-licensed professional architect who has expertise in historic preservation and architectural history. Requires the remaining members to represent the general public. Provides that a person is not eligible for appointment as a member of THC if the person or person's spouse meets certain requirements, rather than prohibits a person from being a THC member if the person or the person's spouse meets certain requirements.

SECTION 2. Requires the governor, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to appoint six additional members to the THC as required by Section 442.002(b), Government Code, as amended by this Act. Sets forth certain requirements for the governor's appointments.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.