

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 824
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Section 659.012 of the Texas Government Code governs salaries for judges serving in district courts—the trial courts of general jurisdiction in Texas. The maximum allowable salary for a district judge with combined state and county funds is \$158,000. Typically, judges in large, urban counties bear a great deal of extrajudicial service duties to perform. Payment for these services count against the statutory cap on judicial compensation—meaning that no matter how many extrajudicial services these judges perform, they cannot earn more than the cap. This cap creates a disincentive for judges to perform extrajudicial services. Very populous Texas counties face difficulty in retaining quality district judges for the administration of justice and these vital extrajudicial services.

S.B. 824 amends Section 659.012 of the Texas Government Code to alter the district judge salary cap for district courts in counties with a population greater than 750,000, by excluding compensation for extrajudicial services provided by a district judge.

S.B. 824 would allow populous counties permissive authority to increase compensation of their district judges for extrajudicial services, thereby allowing them to provide a greater amount of these services to their courts.

As proposed, S.B. 824 amends current law relating to compensation of certain district judges for performing extrajudicial services.

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 659.012, Government Code, by adding Subsection (c), to provide that, for purposes of Subsection (a)(1) (relating to the annual salary of a district court judge), the combined salary of a district judge serving in a county with a population of 750,000 or more does not include compensation for performing extrajudicial services.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.