86R297 DMS-D

By:  Herrero, et al. H.B. No. 354

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to exemption of certain firefighters and police officers from jury service.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 62.106(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  A person qualified to serve as a petit juror may establish an exemption from jury service if the person:

(1)  is over 70 years of age;

(2)  has legal custody of a child younger than 12 years of age and the person's service on the jury requires leaving the child without adequate supervision;

(3)  is a student of a public or private secondary school;

(4)  is a person enrolled and in actual attendance at an institution of higher education;

(5)  is an officer or an employee of the senate, the house of representatives, or any department, commission, board, office, or other agency in the legislative branch of state government;

(6)  is summoned for service in a county with a population of at least 200,000, unless that county uses a jury plan under Section 62.011 and the period authorized under Section 62.011(b)(5) exceeds two years, and the person has served as a petit juror in the county during the 24-month period preceding the date the person is to appear for jury service;

(7)  is the primary caretaker of a person who is unable to care for himself or herself;

(8)  except as provided by Subsection (b), is summoned for service in a county with a population of at least 250,000 and the person has served as a petit juror in the county during the three-year period preceding the date the person is to appear for jury service; [~~or~~]

(9)  is a member of the United States military forces serving on active duty and deployed to a location away from the person's home station and out of the person's county of residence;

(10)  is a firefighter, including a fire chief, who is a permanent, paid employee of the fire department of a municipality or county or of a special district or authority that provides firefighting services; or

(11)  is a police officer, including a police chief, who is a permanent, paid employee of the police department of a municipality or county.

SECTION 2.  The changes in law made by this Act apply only to the establishment of an exemption from jury service for a person summoned to appear for jury service on a date on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.