H.B. No. 3503

AN ACT

relating to firearms training for county jailers.

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

SECTION 1.  Subchapter F, Chapter 1701, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Section 1701.2561 to read as follows:

Sec. 1701.2561.  FIREARMS TRAINING FOR COUNTY JAILERS. (a) The commission shall develop a basic training program in the use of firearms by county jailers. The program must provide instruction in:

(1)  legal limitations on the use of firearms and on the powers and authority of jailers;

(2)  range firing and procedure;

(3)  firearms safety and maintenance; and

(4)  other topics determined by the commission to be necessary for the responsible use of firearms by jailers.

(b)  The commission shall administer the training program and shall issue a certificate of firearms proficiency to each county jailer the commission determines has successfully completed the program.

(c)  A county jailer who is issued a certificate of firearms proficiency and who maintains weapons proficiency in accordance with Section 1701.355 may carry a firearm:

(1)  during the course of performing duties as a county jailer, including while transporting persons confined in the county jail; and

(2)  while traveling to or from the jailer's place of assignment.

SECTION 2.  Section 1701.355, Occupations Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as follows:

(a-1)  An agency that employs one or more county jailers who have been issued a certificate of firearms proficiency under Section 1701.2561 shall designate a firearms proficiency officer and require the jailers to demonstrate weapons proficiency to the firearms proficiency officer at least annually. The agency shall maintain records of the weapons proficiency of the agency's jailers. A county jailer's failure to demonstrate weapons proficiency does not affect the county jailer's license under this chapter.

(b)  On request, the commission may waive the requirement that a peace officer or county jailer demonstrate weapons proficiency on a determination by the commission that the requirement causes a hardship.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

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    President of the Senate Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3503 was passed by the House on May 10, 2019, by the following vote:  Yeas 141, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3503 was passed by the Senate on May 20, 2019, by the following vote:  Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

                    Date

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                  Governor