|  |
| --- |
| BILL ANALYSIS |

|  |
| --- |
| H.B. 3482 |
| By: Rose |
| Ways & Means |
| Committee Report (Unamended) |

|  |
| --- |
| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**  Judges have the discretion in appointing outside counsel and public defenders for indigent populations. Public defenders move cases through the criminal justice system and help counties clear cases at a faster rate and provide legal services to defendants at a cheaper cost for taxpayers than most outside counsel. It is reported, however, that counties are at a tax disadvantage in funding a public defender's office as state law allows a county's property tax rate to be adjusted to reflect increases in indigent defense compensation expenditures associated with the use of outside appointed counsel but not expenditures associated with a public defender's office. H.B. 3482 seeks to remedy this issue. |
| **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**  H.B. 3482 amends the Tax Code to include the amount paid by a county to fund the operations of a public defender's office in the calculation of the county's indigent defense compensation expenditures for a tax year for purposes of adjusting the county's no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate to reflect increases in those expenditures. |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE**  January 1, 2022. |