

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 909
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Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The improper storage of firearms and the failure to follow proper safety practices underlie many incidents involving accidents with firearms. The unsafe handling of firearms often has tragic consequences, and it is not uncommon for improperly stored firearms to end up in the wrong hands. C.S.H.B. 909 seeks to help address these concerns by designating August as Firearm Safety Awareness Month in order to increase awareness of firearm safety and encourage safe firearm ownership.

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

C.S.H.B. 909 amends the Government Code to designate August as Firearm Safety Awareness Month for the following purposes:

- increasing awareness of firearm safety;
- encouraging community residents and leaders to discuss the safe and responsible ownership, storage, and use of firearms for recreational and defensive purposes; and
- promoting voluntary and collaborative methods that improve public safety.

The bill authorizes the following:

- the month to be regularly observed through appropriate activities and programs in communities to increase awareness of and instruction on the responsible use of firearms; and
- a firearms accident prevention program to include animated videos, activity books, and other instructional materials for community residents of all ages.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 909 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute makes the following changes:

- changes the designated month for Firearm Safety Awareness Month from June to August;
- specifies that the safe and responsible ownership, storage, and use of firearms that community residents and leaders are encouraged to discuss is the safe and responsible ownership, storage, and use of firearms for recreational and defensive purposes; and
- with regard to the month's observance:
 - provides for programs in addition to activities; and
 - replaces education on the responsible use of firearms with instruction on such responsible use.

The substitute includes a provision authorizing a firearms accident prevention program to include animated videos, activity books, and other instructional materials for community residents of all ages.