

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2301  
By: Parker  
Criminal Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) offers a service to victims of family violence, sexual assault or abuse, human trafficking, or stalking called the address confidentiality program. Eligible participants in the program are provided a confidential post office box address at which they can receive mail. The OAG forwards mail from the confidential address to participants of the program so that vulnerable individuals do not have to provide their address to certain people. This program is a great service to protect a victim's privacy in regard to their home; however, abusers can still locate them by using their name. In order to receive a name change in Texas, a petitioner must submit to the court, among other information, their street address. Providing this information when seeking a name change can pose a risk for individuals enrolled in the address confidentiality program. H.B. 2301 seeks to provide these individuals an avenue for changing their name without disclosing their address of residence to the court.

### **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. 2301 amends the Family Code to exempt an adult participant in the address confidentiality program for certain crime victims who files a petition requesting a change of name from the requirements to provide the street address of the petitioner's place of residence and the petitioner's reason for the requested change of name, if the petitioner provides a copy of an authorization card certifying their participation in the program. With respect to such a petitioner, the bill establishes a presumption that a change of name is in the interest or to the benefit of the petitioner and in the interest of the public. The bill makes an order issued to change the petitioner's name confidential and prohibits release of the order by the court to any person, regardless of whether the petitioner continues to participate in the program following the change of name.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.