

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 194  
By: Ortega  
Insurance  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

In 2016, an El Pasoan teenager was killed on an amusement ride due to the failure of the ride operator to comply with safety standards for the ride. Unfortunately, current law does not adequately protect the safety and well-being of Texans who attend amusement parks. H.B. 194 seeks to increase the safety of all amusement park visitors in Texas by requiring ride operators to comply with certain age and training requirements, with an exception provided for certain water slide dispatchers.

### **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. 194 amends the Occupations Code to require a person who directly controls or has the duty to directly control the operation of an amusement ride to be at least 16 years of age and trained in the proper use and operation of the ride the person is operating. The bill prohibits such a ride operator from simultaneously operating more than one amusement ride unless the operator is a dispatcher stationed at the top of adjacent or proximate elevated waterslide amusement rides to maintain order and direct patrons to safely enter and depart the top of the slides. The bill prohibits an operator from operating an amusement ride if the operation constitutes the offense of assembling or operating an amusement ride while intoxicated. For purposes of the bill's provisions, a certified lifeguard is considered a ride operator only if they are working as waterslide dispatcher.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.