

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 232
By: Swanson
Elections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Candidates for state, county, and congressional elected office are required to pay a filing fee, the amount of which is set by statute, prior to running for office to help defray the cost of elections. Concerns have been raised that these fees have not increased to match inflation. C.S.H.B. 232 seeks to address these concerns by increasing the filing fees to run for such candidates in the general primary election.

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. 232 amends the Election Code to increase the filing fees for candidates in the general primary election as follows:

- from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for a United States senator;
- from \$3,750 to \$7,500 for an office elected statewide, except United States senator;
- from \$3,125 to \$6,250 for a United States representative;
- from \$1,250 to \$2,500 for a state senator;
- from \$750 to \$1,500 for a state representative;
- from \$300 to \$600 for a member of the State Board of Education;
- from \$1,875 to \$3,750 for a chief justice or justice of a court of appeals, other than a justice that serves a court of appeals district in which a county with a population of more than one million is wholly or partly situated;
- from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for a chief justice or justice of a court of appeals that serves such a court of appeals district;
- from \$1,500 to \$3,000 for a district judge or judge for which a fee is not otherwise prescribed;
- from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for a district or criminal district judge of a court in a judicial district wholly contained in a county with a population of more than 1.5 million;
- from \$1,500 to \$3,000 for a judge of a statutory court, other than a judge of a statutory court in a county with a population of more than 1.5 million;
- from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for a judge of a statutory court in a county with a population of more than 1.5 million;
- from \$1,250 to \$2,500 for a district attorney, criminal district attorney, or a county attorney performing the duties of a district attorney;

- for a county commissioner, district clerk, county clerk, sheriff, county tax assessor-collector, county treasurer, or judge, constitutional county court:
 - from \$1,250 to \$2,500 in a county with a population of 200,000 or more; and
 - from \$750 to \$1,500 in a county with a population of under 200,000;
- for a justice of the peace or constable:
 - from \$1,000 to \$2,000 in a county with a population of 200,000 or more; and
 - from \$375 to \$750 in a county with a population of under 200,000;
- from \$75 to \$150 for a county surveyor; and
- from \$750 to \$1,500 for an office of the county government for which a fee is not otherwise prescribed.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 232 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The only fee the introduced increased was the filing fee for a candidate for state representative in the general primary election, from \$750 to \$1,250. The substitute increases that filing fee to \$1,500 instead and also increases the filing fees for candidates for all the other elected offices in that election.