

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 568  
By: Bowers  
Homeland Security & Public Safety  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

With an aging population, Alzheimer's disease continues to rise, as does the likelihood that peace officers will come into contact with an individual with the disease in their community. There is a general understanding that an individual with Alzheimer's may be unable to recognize persons or landmarks that would be familiar to someone without the disease because of memory loss. However, it has not been widely understood that those with Alzheimer's can also be irrational, confused, and even combative because of their perceptions of where they are, what they are doing, and what is happening around them. As a result, individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia have unique communication needs. Many law enforcement officials are not aware of Alzheimer's symptoms or are unaware of the proper techniques needed to effectively communicate with this segment of the population, which may lead to confusion and a possible hostile encounter. H.B. 568 seeks to improve interactions between law enforcement and those with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias by requiring peace officers to receive specialized training that will equip them with techniques for recognizing symptoms, communicating effectively, utilizing alternatives to physical restraints, and identifying signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

### **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. 568 amends the Occupations Code to require the 40-hour statewide education and training program on de-escalation and crisis intervention techniques to facilitate interaction with persons with mental impairments included among the curriculum requirements for peace officer training schools to include specific instruction on interacting with persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. This instruction must include techniques for recognizing symptoms, communicating effectively, employing alternatives to physical restraints, and identifying signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The bill requires the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement to revise its education and training programs not later than April 1, 2024, as necessary to implement the revised training requirements, which apply only to a person who submits an application for a peace officer license on or after that date.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.