

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 628
By: Harris, Cody
Transportation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A hero remembered never dies. This is especially true of the brave men and women who put their lives on the line every day across Texas. The law enforcement officers who have lost their lives serving their communities deserve recognition for their ultimate sacrifice. C.S.H.B. 628 seeks to honor fallen law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty and their families by requiring the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to issue specialty license plates recognizing these officers and by providing for the fees for the issuance of the license plates to be used to provide financial assistance to the survivors of fallen peace officers killed in the line of duty.

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. 628 amends the Transportation Code to require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates to honor law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. The bill requires the license plates to include the following:

- the words "A Hero Remembered Never Dies";
- the words "Honoring Law Enforcement"; and
- a depiction of a badge covered by a black mourning band.

The remainder of the fee for issuance of the license plates, after deduction of TxDMV administrative costs, must be deposited to the credit of an account in a trust fund created by the comptroller of public accounts outside the general revenue fund. Money deposited to that account may be used only by the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) to provide financial assistance to surviving family members of peace officers killed in the line of duty under Government Code provisions governing such assistance by ERS. The bill exempts a specialty license plate issued under the bill from statutory provisions establishing filing deadlines and deposits for certain specialty license plates authorized for issuance after January 1, 1999.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 628 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.

Whereas the introduced required money from the remainder of the fee of issuance of the license plates to be used by ERS to provide financial assistance to survivors of peace officers, the substitute clarifies that those survivors are the surviving family members of peace officers killed in the line of duty.