

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 879
By: Cook
County Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In Texas, a person who files for the office of constable in a populous county is only required to have an associate's degree from an accredited institution and is not required to have any law enforcement training in order to be considered eligible for the office. Candidates for the office of constable in these counties would be better qualified if they met the training and experience level of active or honorably retired peace officers or criminal investigators and this would ensure that an elected constable is qualified for the position. H.B. 879 seeks to address this issue by removing the option for a person to qualify for the office of constable in a county with a population of 200,000 or more without law enforcement experience.

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. 879 amends the Local Government Code to remove the option for a person, as part of the eligibility requirements to serve as constable in a county with a population of 200,000 or more, to hold at least an applicable associate's degree in lieu of holding applicable status as a special investigator or as an honorably retired peace officer or federal criminal investigator. The bill applies only to a constable elected or appointed to serve a term of office that begins on or after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.