

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4752
By: Gervin-Hawkins
Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, there are three Rosenwald school structures in the south central region of Texas that are not in use and are run down and in need of repair and renovation. The schools are significant to African American history and helped shaped the lives of many African American leaders. Representative Gervin-Hawkins is working with stakeholders to renovate the structures into house community learning centers that will be host to programs for teaching, technology, literature, and other programming related to learning. C.S.H.B. 4752 seeks to address the issue of these unrenovated, historical school buildings and their unrealized potential by requiring the Texas Historical Commission to establish a program to acquire the school's structures for the purpose of renovating and preserving them. The legislation would also allow the commission to use the structures as a community learning centers once acquired.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Historical Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4752 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Historical Commission to establish a program to identify, renovate, restore, maintain, and preserve Rosenwald Schools structures, and their contents, located in Texas and protect the historical and architectural integrity of the exterior, interior, and grounds of those structures. The bill authorizes the commission to do the following:

- acquire property containing a Rosenwald School structure as part of the program;
- use such a structure restored, repaired, or renovated under the program as a community learning center;
- accept gifts, grants, and in-kind donations from public and private entities to implement the program; and
- adopt rules reasonably necessary to implement the program.

The bill authorizes the legislature to appropriate money to the commission to implement the program and requires the commission to first implement the program in the south central region of Texas.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 4752 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.

While both the introduced and the substitute provide for the repair and renovation of Rosewood school structures, the introduced required the commission to conduct a study to assess the necessary funding and develop a financial plan for such improvements and examine the feasibility of using them as community learning centers, but the substitute requires the commission to establish a program to identify, maintain, renovate, restore, maintain, and preserve the structures and their contents and protect the historical and architectural integrity of the structures. Moreover, the substitute includes provisions absent from the introduced that authorize the commission to acquire property containing such a structure, use structures as community learning centers, and adopt rules and accept certain gifts, grants, and donations to implement the program. The substitute also authorizes the legislature to appropriate money to the commission to implement the program and requires the commission to first implement the program in the south central region, whereas the introduced did not include this authorization or this requirement.

While the introduced provided for the commission to consult with Prairie View A&M University and counties and municipalities in which the structures are located in conducting the study, the substitute does not provide for any collaboration with respect to the program's implementation.

Additionally, the substitute omits the following provisions present in the introduced:

- the requirement for the commission, not later than September 1, 2024, to prepare and submit a report to the legislature; and
- the provision establishing that the bill expires December 1, 2024.