

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
88R5556 SCP-D

S.B. 553  
By: West; Creighton  
Business & Commerce  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Prior to 2022, it had been at least 30 years since the State of Texas dedicated a new state office building. In that time, the legislature created the Texas Facilities Commission, and vested in that agency the responsibility for construction of most state buildings, excluding certain buildings such as state hospitals and buildings at institutions of higher education.

When the state began working on a dedication ceremony for the Barbara Jordan State Office Building, working with Appropriations Control at the Comptroller of Public Accounts, a variety of concerns were raised that, under current law, it was not clear whether expenditures related to things like food and beverages, chair rental, program printing, and invitation postage for the grand opening of a state office building would be considered as accomplishing a public purpose under Article III, Texas Constitution. Additionally, it was determined that the Texas Attorney General's Office has issued opinions indicating such would likely not be considered for a public purpose.

As a result, neither the Barbara Jordan nor the George H. W. Bush State Office Buildings have yet been opened. A pending opening for the Bush building was cancelled; an opening for the Barbara Jordan Building is in the process of being set, but is being paid for with private funds donated by a member of Jordan's sorority.

Without specific legislation authorizing the Texas Facilities Commission to purchase items necessary for a building dedication ceremony, no state funds can be spent on an office building dedication.

Passage of this legislation will allow for a dedication of the Bush building to go forward, as when as eventual dedications of other new state office buildings.

As proposed, S.B. 553 amends current law relating to dedication ceremonies for new state buildings.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 2166, Government Code, by adding Section 2166.0611, as follows:

Sec. 2166.0611. BUILDING DEDICATION CEREMONY. (a) Authorizes the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) to hold a ceremony to dedicate a new state building.

(b) Authorizes TFC to use available appropriated money or donated money to pay for that ceremony, subject to Subsection (c).

(c) Authorizes TFC, notwithstanding any other law, to use not more than \$20,000 of appropriated money to purchase food, nonalcoholic beverages, flowers,

decorations, and other items appropriate for the ceremony that TFC would otherwise be prohibited from purchasing.

(d) Authorizes TFC to accept gifts, grants, or donations from any source for the purposes of this section.

(e) Provides that this section does not authorize TFC to purchase alcoholic beverages.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.