

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 694  
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Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

As religious organizations seek to protect themselves, immunity from civil liability is an important consideration. Religious organizations are charitable organizations under certain statutes in the Civil Practice and Remedies Code, and other statutes of that code provide civil liability immunity to volunteers of charitable organizations. S.B. 694 seeks to extend this immunity to security employees of religious organizations and protect employees providing security services to religious organizations from civil liability for any act or omission in the course and scope of their employment or volunteer duties or functions.

### **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**

S.B. 694 amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to grant a religious organization or security personnel of a religious organization immunity from civil liability for any act or omission by the security personnel resulting in death, damage, or injury if the security personnel was acting in the course and scope of their employment or volunteer duties or functions, as applicable, to provide security services to the organization, including an intentional act and an act involving possession or use of a firearm. The bill defines "security personnel" as an individual whom a religious organization hires to provide security services to the organization as an employee or who is a volunteer of a religious organization whose duties or functions include providing security services to the organization. The bill also defines "religious organization" as a charitable organization that is a religious organization because of the following:

- the organization's primary purpose and function are religious, it is a religious school organized primarily for religious and educational purposes, or it is a religious charity organized primarily for religious and charitable purposes; and
- it does not engage in activities that would disqualify it from tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as it existed on August 30, 1999.

The bill applies only to a cause of action that accrues on or after the bill's effective date.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.