

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 736
By: Whitmire
Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association Local 341 works in the City of Houston under a collective bargaining agreement. For the past five years, the firefighters have worked without a contract, because the firefighters and the city have been unable to resolve contractual differences. S.B. 736 seeks to provide for an impasse between firefighters and the city to be resolved through mandatory arbitration.

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. 736 amends the Local Government Code to require a public employer and an association that is a bargaining agent for employees of a fire department that serves a municipality with a minimum population of 1.9 million to submit to binding interest arbitration under the following circumstances:

- if the parties reach an impasse in collective bargaining; or
- if the parties are unable to settle after the 61st day after the date the appropriate lawmaking body fails to approve a contract reached through collective bargaining.

S.B. 736 requires, for purposes of binding arbitration, each party to send to the other party a written notice specifying each issue in dispute not later than the fifth day after the following dates:

- the date an impasse was reached in the collective bargaining process;
- the expiration of a collective bargaining period extended by written agreement by the parties for the prescribed period; or
- the expiration of the period after the 61st day after the date the appropriate lawmaking body fails to approve a collective bargaining contract.

Such a notice is considered sent on the date the notice is placed in the mail, personally delivered, or transmitted by email or any other means of electronic transfer.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.