

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1730
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Local Government
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

County court clerks in Texas can issue passports, but federal law requires payment for passports to be completed either via personal check or money order. Many persons, however, do not use personal checks and must go to a nearby grocery store, bank, convenience store, or post office to obtain a money order. The Travis County District Clerk has reported that persons often arrive at their passport appointments without a personal check or money order. Accordingly, they lose their appointment time and have to reschedule, which can be a lengthy process.

S.B. 1730 would authorize district clerks to sell and to distribute money orders for passport application payments. This would make obtaining passports at clerks' offices more convenient and avoid complicating what should be a simple process.

As proposed, S.B. 1730 amends current law relating to the processing of United States passport applications by a district court clerk and authorizes fees.

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 Sections 51.3031(a) and (b), Government Code, as follows:

- (a) Authorizes a district clerk to perform all duties necessary to process an application for a United States passport, including taking passport photographs and selling money orders to applicants for payment purposes.
- (b) Authorizes a district clerk, to recover the costs of taking passport photographs and selling money orders, to collect reasonable fees for the provided services in amounts set by the commissioners court of the county in which the district clerk's office is located. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2023.