

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1261  
By: Cunningham  
Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Current law requires notice of certain abandoned or unclaimed property seized by a peace officer to be published in an applicable newspaper of local or regional circulation. This law was written at a time when newspapers were a primary form of mass communication. According to witness testimony, there is a need for a more efficient and cost-effective method of publishing notice given the high cost of print publication and decline in newspaper readership. H.B. 1261 seeks to provide law enforcement agencies the option to instead publish notice on the agency's official Internet and social media websites.

### **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**

H.B. 1261 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to revise the procedures governing the disposition of unclaimed or abandoned personal property seized by a peace officer to provide an alternative to mailing notices or publishing the notices in a newspaper, as applicable, wherein the notice requirement could instead be satisfied by placing a one-time notice on the Internet website and social networking website of the law enforcement agency that seized the property. These provisions apply only to personal property seized by a peace officer on or after the bill's effective date. Personal property seized before the bill's effective date is governed by the law in effect on the date the property was seized, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2025.