

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2217
By: Wharton
Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the 87th Regular Session, the Texas Legislature passed S.B. 2222, which appropriated funds to equip all Department of Public Safety highway patrol vehicles with lifesaving bullet-resistant glass and front door panels for increased officer safety. However, the bill author has informed the committee that Texas has seen a rise in violence against law enforcement, citing that multiple officers have been shot and killed through the glass of their patrol vehicles since 2013. The bill's author has further informed the committee that with officer safety remaining a top priority, many law enforcement agencies in Texas have ordered additional bullet-resistant components for their vehicles or are searching for funding options to obtain them. H.B. 2217 seeks to resolve this issue by establishing a grant program administered by the governor's criminal justice division to enhance officer safety and reduce fatalities by equipping local law enforcement vehicles with bullet-resistant windshields, side windows, and door panels.

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. 2217 amends the Government Code to require the governor's criminal justice division to establish and administer a grant program to provide financial assistance to a law enforcement agency to purchase and install motor vehicles used by peace officers of the law enforcement agency in discharging the officers' official duties with bullet-resistant windshields, side windows, rear windows, and door panels. The bill requires the criminal justice division to establish the following regarding the program:

- eligibility criteria for grant applicants;
- grant application procedures;
- guidelines relating to grant amounts;
- procedures for evaluating grant applications; and
- procedures for monitoring the use of a grant awarded under the program and ensuring compliance with any conditions of a grant.

The bill requires a law enforcement agency receiving such a grant, as soon as practicable after spending the grant money, to provide to the criminal justice division proof of purchase and installation, as applicable, of bullet-resistant windshields, side windows, rear windows, or door panels and authorizes the criminal justice division to use any available money to implement the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.