

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3248
By: Cortez
Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that Port San Antonio, a defense base development authority located on the former Kelly Air Force Base, has evolved into a major hub for aerospace, cybersecurity, and high-tech commercial innovation. However, under current state law, a defense base development authority's board of directors lacks the explicit authority to employ and commission peace officers, which can create security gaps and put added pressure on local law enforcement officers, who are sometimes already stretched across large urban areas. The bill author has also informed the committee that local leaders and Port San Antonio stakeholders have expressed the desire for a dedicated law enforcement presence on the site of Port San Antonio because of mission-critical operations, sensitive U.S. Department of Defense projects, and the constant movement of defense and commercial personnel on the property—conditions that underscore the importance of a specialized police force to ensure swift and tailored responses to safety or security concerns. H.B. 3248 seeks to allow defense base development authorities to respond rapidly to emergent threats, maintain a secure environment for high-level defense and commercial operations, and reduce the burden on municipal and county law enforcement by authorizing the board of directors of a defense base development authority to employ and commission peace officers.

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. 3248 amends the Local Government Code to authorize the board of directors of a defense base development authority to employ and commission peace officers for the authority to prevent or abate the commission of offenses relating to port functions, facilities, and operations under state or local law. The bill establishes that the jurisdiction of such a peace officer includes the property owned or controlled by the authority and grants such a peace officer, in their jurisdiction, the authority granted by Code of Criminal Procedure provisions relating to arrests without a warrant.

H.B. 3248 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to include an officer commissioned by a defense base development authority's board of directors among the individuals classified as peace officers.

H.B. 3248 establishes that, to the extent of any conflict, the bill prevails over another act of the 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted codes.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.