

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3425  
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Criminal Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The bill author has informed the committee that Internet crime is a growing problem in today's technology-focused world, with growing threats such as "doxing," whereby a person gathers another individual's personal information and posts it publicly without permission. The 88th Texas Legislature enacted H.B. 611 to make disclosure of a residence address or phone number on a website, with intent to harm, a state offense. The bill author has further informed the committee that doxing, however, can happen not just in postings on a website but also through electronic messaging, which is not addressed in current statute. H.B. 3425 closes this gap in current law, protecting both public servants and private individuals from the unlawful disclosure of a residence address or telephone number through an electronic communication, such as an email, phone call, instant message, or social media platform.

### **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. 3425 amends the Penal Code to do the following:

- expand the conduct that constitutes the offense of obstruction or retaliation to include the disclosure through an electronic communication of the residence address or telephone number of an individual the actor knows is a public servant or a member of a public servant's family or household with the intent to cause harm or a threat of harm to the individual or a member of the individual's family or household in retaliation for or on account of the service or status of the individual as a public servant; and
- expand the conduct that constitutes the offense of unlawful disclosure of the residence address or telephone number of an individual to include the disclosure through an electronic communication the residence address or telephone number of an individual with the intent to cause harm or a threat of harm to the individual or a member of the individual's family or household.

For these purposes, the bill defines "electronic communication" by reference as a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photo-optical system.

H.B. 3425 applies only to an offense committed on or after the bill's effective date. An offense committed before that date is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For these purposes, an

offense was committed before the bill's effective date if any element of the offense occurred before that date.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2025.