BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 5645
By: Holt
Intergovernmental Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Montgomery County Ethics Commission currently operates with a chair term length of six months. The bill author has informed the committee that commissioner Hank Vat has expressed concerns that the short term length may hinder the commission's ability to maintain consistent leadership and effectively address ongoing ethical issues. The bill author has further informed the committee that a longer term would have several benefits, such as allowing the chair to develop and implement long-term strategies more effectively, reducing the frequency of leadership transitions and therefore ensuring a more consistent approach to ethical governance, and enabling the chair to build stronger relationships with other commissioners and stakeholders. H.B. 5645 extends the term of the chair of a county ethics commission from six months to one year.

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. 5645 amends the Local Government Code to extend the term of the chair of a county ethics commission from six months to one year. This change applies only to the term of the chair of a county ethics commission selected on or after the bill's effective date. The term of the chair of a county ethics commission selected before the bill's effective date is governed by the law in effect on the date the selection was made, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.