

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R18241 SCF-D

C.S.S.B. 1426
By: Huffman
Finance
3/31/2025
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 1426 grants the Texas Historical Commission jurisdiction over, and responsibility for maintaining, preserving, and operating, the First Capitol State Historic Site and replica building of the First Republic of Texas House of Representatives located in West Columbia, Texas.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 1426 amends current law relating to operation and management of the first capitol state historic site and replica by the Texas Historical Commission.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 442, Government Code, by adding Subchapter B-3, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER B-3. FIRST CAPITOL STATE HISTORIC SITE

Sec. 442.068. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission," "first capitol site," and "replica."

Sec. 442.0681. JURISDICTION AND MAINTENANCE OF FIRST CAPITOL SITE AND REPLICA. (a) Provides that the first capitol state historic site located in West Columbia, Texas (first capitol site), and the replica of the first Republic of Texas house of representatives building housed on the first capitol site (replica) are under the jurisdiction of the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Provides that THC is responsible for the preservation, maintenance, and operation of the site and replica.

(b) Requires THC to:

(1) develop, expand, and manage the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) expanding, renovating, and managing the site and replica to enhance visitor experience and historical accuracy;

(B) overseeing maintenance and operations of the site and replica to ensure long-term preservation and public accessibility; and

(C) providing financial support for ongoing operations and new projects, such as administration, personnel, and site improvements;

(2) enhance the facilities and infrastructure for the site by:

(A) relocating the replica to a historically accurate location on the site;

(B) constructing a historically accurate replication of the first Republic of Texas senate building on the site;

(C) constructing and maintaining a visitor center on the site to provide educational resources, exhibitions, and interactive experiences for visitors; and

(D) implementing other improvements to the site's facilities and infrastructure in accordance with the site's purpose and mission;

(3) assume responsibility for the historic preservation and interpretation of the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) preserving and maintaining historical documents, artifacts, relics, and other items of historical significance related to the site and this state;

(B) developing exhibitions and interpretive programs to reflect the site's mission and educate the public; and

(C) conducting ongoing research to enhance the accuracy and depth of the site's programs;

(4) oversee the operations of and personnel for the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) employing a site director and other personnel THC considers necessary to fulfill THC's duties and responsibilities for the site;

(B) establishing efficient operational and visitor engagement policies and procedures; and

(C) ensuring personnel development aligns with current best practices for historic site management;

(5) acquire resources and seek donations for the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) accepting and managing donations of money, land, historical relics, or other donations supporting the site's mission;

(B) seeking grant opportunities and public-private partnerships to increase funding for site preservation and improvement efforts; and

(C) acquiring property and artifacts aligned with the historical significance of the site that contribute to the site's mission and narrative;

(6) strategically develop the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) identifying and acquiring real property adjacent or relevant to the site to support the mission of and expand the site;

(B) ensuring all acquisition of real property aligns with the historical context of the site and contributes to an authentic and immersive visitor experience; and

(C) engaging in strategic planning to enhance the site's presence in the nearby community and promote heritage tourism;

(7) facilitate community engagement and partnership for the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) collaborating with local organizations, schools, and other relevant stakeholders to foster community involvement and support of the site;

(B) establishing partnerships with historical societies, institutions of higher education, and cultural organizations to strengthen the site's educational impact; and

(C) hosting events, lectures, and programs that encourage public participation and awareness of this state's history; and

(8) ensure responsible stewardship of resources and the first capitol site and replica by:

(A) maintaining ethical and professional standards for site operations; and

(B) conducting periodic assessments to measure progress and identify areas to improve stewardship of the site.

Sec. 442.0682. GRANTS; DONATIONS. Authorizes THC to accept a grant or donation for any program or purpose of the first capitol site and replica.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2025.