

Exempting personnel of certain airports from fire fighting training

HB 738 by Bonnen (Jackson)

DIGEST: HB 738 would have exempted a person employed by certain airports serving unscheduled large aircraft flights from being certified for aircraft fire fighting and rescue fire protection without the training prescribed by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection.

**GOVERNOR'S
REASON FOR
VETO:**

“House Bill No. 738 would permit a person employed by a Class IV airport, which has an Airport Operating Certificate from the Federal Aviation Administration, to be appointed to a paid position with aircraft firefighter responsibilities.

“However, this bill would unnecessarily impact the standardization of airport firefighting and the regulatory authority of the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP). I am confident the TCFP can use its existing statutory authority when necessary to address unique situations of an airport in a manner that balances the needs of the airport with its regulatory framework.”

RESPONSE: Rep. Dennis Bonnen, the bill’s author, had no comment on the veto.

Sen. Mike Jackson, the Senate sponsor, said: “I was disappointed to learn that HB 738 had been vetoed because the bill would have saved the small Brazoria County Airport from paying for expensive and unnecessary structure fire training. The airport has been in existence for more than 26 years and its employees have never responded to a structure fire and never will. The airport is equipped with emergency response fire fighting equipment on the field and their technicians have training to respond to aircraft fires only. They remain in compliance with all Federal Aviation Administration safety requirements.”

NOTES: HB 738 passed the House on the Local, Consent, and Resolutions Calendar and was not analyzed in a *Daily Floor Report*.