

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 847
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted with concern that there is an inconsistent salary growth plan for certain judges and justices and that these salaries do not keep pace with inflation, thus creating an obstacle to attracting highly qualified individuals to the judiciary. It is of particular concern that longevity pay is introduced late in a judge's or justice's tenure. H.B. 847 seeks to address the latter concern by restructuring the provision of longevity pay to begin earlier and increase at an even rate from that point forward.

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. 847 amends the Government Code to change the monthly amount of longevity pay to which a judge or justice who receives a salary paid by the state, is a member of the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan One or Plan Two, and is an active judge is entitled from an amount equal to the product of 0.031 multiplied by the amount of the judge's or justice's current monthly state salary to an amount equal to the product of 0.2 percent of the judge's or justice's current monthly state salary multiplied by the number of years of service credited to the judge or justice in the applicable retirement system. The bill decreases from 16 years to four years the number of years of such service that must be completed before the longevity pay becomes payable. The bill's provisions apply to longevity pay payable to a judge or justice after the bill's effective date, regardless of the date the judge or justice first becomes entitled to longevity pay.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.