

**SUBJECT:** Central jury pooling requirements

**COMMITTEE:** County Affairs — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 5 ayes — R. Lewis, Bonnen, Chisum, Christian, Denny  
0 nays  
4 absent — Kamel, Flores, Gutierrez, G. Lewis

**WITNESSES:** (*On committee substitute*):  
For — Donald Lee, Conference of Urban Counties  
  
Against — None

**BACKGROUND :** Counties with three or more district or criminal courts can call a general panel of jurors to serve throughout the county court system. Jurors report to a central location to receive court assignments.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 236 would prohibit counties from requiring jurors to return to a central jury pooling location for another assignment if they had traveled more than 10 miles away from the central pooling location to fulfill a court assignment.  
  
The bill would take effect September 1, 1997.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** CSHB 236 would extend a nominal but much appreciated consideration to citizens performing their civic duty by serving in jury pools by providing for them to be dismissed by the court where they have completed their jury duty assignment. In urban counties, jurors are frequently required to drive from the central jury pooling location to outlying justice of the peace courts to fulfill their court assignments. Jury participants are performing a public service and should not be burdened by having to drive unduly long distances.  
  
CSHB 236 would cost nothing to implement, but would save jurors time and money.

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OPPONENTS  
SAY: No apparent opposition.

NOTES: The committee substitute deleted a requirement to reimburse jurors for mileage driven and stipulated that jurors would not be required to report back to the central jury pooling location after having driven 10 miles to their court assignment.