

SUBJECT: Allowing juvenile probation officers to carry firearms

COMMITTEE: Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 5 ayes — Carter, Driver, Hupp, P. King, Najera
0 nays
4 absent — B. Turner, Keel, Berman, Gutierrez

WITNESSES: For — Jim Houston, Bandera County Juvenile Probation Department; Robert Kelley, Medina County Juvenile Probation Department; Tony McDuffie, Cass County Juvenile Probation Department
Against — None

DIGEST: HB 1288 would repeal the current prohibition against juvenile probation officers carrying firearms in sec. 141.066, Human Resources Code. The bill would allow a juvenile probation officer to carry a weapon on official duty if authorized by the county juvenile board. The officer would have to have a certificate of firearms proficiency issued by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLOSE).

HB 1288 would require TCLOSE and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission to adopt by rule a memorandum of understanding on developing a basic firearms training program by January 1, 2000. The program would provide instruction in: legal limitations on use of firearms and on the powers and authority of juvenile probation officers; range firing and procedure; firearms safety and maintenance; and other topics deemed necessary. TCLOSE would administer the program and could establish reasonable and necessary fees.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house.