

SUBJECT: Prohibiting railroad commissioners from running for office during terms

COMMITTEE: State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 13 ayes — Wolens, S. Turner, Alvarado, Bailey, Brimer, Craddick, Danburg, Hilbert, Hunter, D. Jones, Longoria, McCall, Merritt

0 nays

2 absent — Counts, Marchant

WITNESSES: None

BACKGROUND: The Railroad Commission regulates the oil and gas industry, as well as other activities including energy, pipeline and rail safety, environmental protection and public safety.

As provided in Art. 16, sec. 30(b) of the Texas Constitution, the commission is composed of three members, elected by the voters for overlapping six-year terms. The terms are full-time, salaried positions, with the commissioners electing the chair. If a vacancy occurs, the governor appoints a replacement, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve until the next general election.

DIGEST: HB 1304 would make railroad commissioners ineligible to be candidates for a general, special, or primary election for any public office during their elected or appointed term as commissioners.

HB 3104 would take effect September 1, 1999, .

**SUPPORTERS/
OPPONENTS
SAY:** See analysis of HJR 85, also on today's calendar.

NOTES: HJR 85 by Merritt, the authorizing constitutional amendment for HB 3104, also is on today's calendar.