

- SUBJECT:** Amending definition of retired peace officer for concealed handgun licensure
- COMMITTEE:** Public Safety — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — B. Turner, Keel, Berman, Driver, Hupp, Isett, P. King
0 nays
2 absent — Gutierrez, Villarreal
- WITNESSES:** For — Sigifredo Gonzalez, Jr., Sheriff’s Association of Texas; Stephen Sanders, Texas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police and Houston Police Patrolmen’s Union; Bill Elkin, Houston Police Retired Officers Association; Ronald G. DeLord, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code, sec. 411.199(c) states that a peace officer who is honorably retired and physically and emotionally fit to possess a handgun may apply for a concealed handgun license. “Honorably retired” means that the applicant did not retire in lieu of any disciplinary action, was employed as a full-time peace officer for at least 10 years by one agency, and is eligible to receive a pension or annuity for law-enforcement service. Among the differences from other applicants, those under sec. 411.199(c) pay \$25 rather than \$140 for the license and application fee and must maintain the proficiency required for a peace officer for the category of weapon licensed rather than obtaining a handgun proficiency certificate.
- DIGEST:** HB 780 would amend the definition of an “honorably retired” peace officer who applies for a concealed handgun license. It would delete the requirement that the applicant must have been a full-time employee of one agency for at least 10 years and would substitute the requirement that the applicant must have been eligible for retirement from the law-enforcement agency or have been ineligible only because of an injury sustained in the line of duty. The bill also would specify that a peace officer could be considered honorably retired if the officer was not eligible to receive a pension or annuity only because the officer’s agency did not offer one.

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HB 780 would take effect September 1, 2001, and would apply only to an application for a license submitted on or after that date.

SUPPORTERS
SAY:

HB 780 is necessary because it would allow peace officers who are forced to retire early because of an injury sustained in the line of duty and officers whose agencies do not offer pensions to apply for a concealed handgun license, as all other honorably retired peace officers are allowed to do under current law. HB 780 would not affect the underlying statute except to make it easier for this group of retired peace officers to apply for a license.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.