

SUBJECT: Continuation and functions of the State Preservation Board

COMMITTEE: Culture, Recreation and Tourism — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Guillen, Aycock, Kuempel, Larson, Nevárez, Smith
0 nays
1 absent — Dukes

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 4 — 30 - 0

WITNESSES: *(On House companion bill, HB 1665)*
For — None
Against — None
On — John Sneed, State Preservation Board; *(Registered, but did not testify):* Faye Rencher, Sunset staff)

BACKGROUND: The State Preservation Board was created in 1983 and is responsible for preserving and maintaining the Capitol, General Land Office Building, Capitol Visitors Parking Garage, and Governor’s Mansion, as well as operating the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. The six-member board includes the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the House, and each of these members appoints one member. The governor’s appointee must be a representative of the general public. The board meets at the call of the governor.

DIGEST: CSSB 201 would continue the State Preservation Board until September 1, 2025. The bill would allow the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker to designate a representative to act, including the ability to vote, on their behalf during a State Preservation Board meeting. The Board would be required to meet at least twice each year.

The bill would establish the Governor’s Mansion renewal trust fund outside of the Treasury with the comptroller for the purposes of preserving and maintaining the Governor’s Mansion. The fund would consist of

money transferred at the discretion of the Legislature and donated money. It would be administered by the board.

The bill would require the executive director of the board to employ a museum director for the Texas State History Museum. The board would also be required to adopt reasonable policies for naming areas within the museum in honor of benefactors.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2013.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSSB 201 would improve the State Preservation Board's administration of the agency. Because the board is made up of some of the state's highest ranking and busiest leaders, it rarely meets and instead uses informal and less transparent decision-making processes. Allowing the three board members with greatest need for scheduling flexibility to designate a representative to meetings would allow the board to focus more closely on the agency operations. Additionally, requiring the board to meet at least twice per year would allow for more oversight of agency operations, particularly related to rulemaking, planning, and budgeting, and would provide more transparency.

The bill would clarify responsibility for the management and operation of the state history museum by establishing the museum director position in statute. The bill also would provide clear authority to adopt reasonable policies for naming areas within the museum after benefactors, which would help the museum raise funds. Additionally, establishing the Governor's Mansion Renewal Trust Fund would help raise funds for the long-term maintenance and preservation the Governor's Mansion.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

CSSB 201 differs from the Senate engrossed version in that the Senate version would have made possessing a burning tobacco product or smoking tobacco on the state Capitol grounds a class C misdemeanor (maximum fine of \$500).

The Senate engrossed version would have required proposals to new constructions in the Capitol Complex to be consistent with Capitol complex design guidelines or standards adopted as part of a 1989 planning process or a subsequently adopted plan. The State Preservation Board

could have disapproved of a project by a public vote not later than the 60th day after the final proposal was received if the proposal did not meet these requirements. The project would have been considered approved by the board if the board did not disapprove before 60 days.

The Senate engrossed version also would have required the board to develop and conduct a study to evaluate the feasibility of establishing lactation suites in the Capitol Complex for breastfeeding mothers.

The House companion bill, HB 1665, was left pending in the Culture, Recreation, and Tourism committee.