

- SUBJECT:** Allowing the Ethics Commission to charge a meal fee at seminars
- COMMITTEE:** General Investigating and Ethics — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — S. Davis, Moody, Capriglione, Nevárez, Shine, Turner
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Price
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Joanne Richards, Common Ground for Texans; Tom Forbes, Professional Advocacy Association of Texas; Carol Birch, Public Citizen Texas; Craig McDonald, Texans for Public Justice; Lon Burnam; Jack Gullahorn; Hamilton Richards)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ian Steusloff, Texas Ethics Commission)
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code, sec. 571.071 authorizes the Texas Ethics Commission to provide seminars for persons required to register as lobbyists that address issues involving lobbying, political contributions and expenditures, and others. The commission may charge a fee for attending a seminar in an amount necessary to cover costs.
- DIGEST:** HB 2470 would allow the Texas Ethics Commission to offer seminars on laws administered and enforced by the commission and other relevant laws, as determined by the commission. The commission could include the cost of food and nonalcoholic beverages in attendance fees charged to persons attending seminars.
- This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2017.