

- SUBJECT:** Establishing the Texas Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony Committee
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 5 ayes — P. King, Nevárez, Holland, Schaefer, Wray
- 0 nays
- 4 absent — Burns, Hinojosa, J. Johnson, Metcalf
- WITNESSES:** For — Charley Wilkison, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; Ashlee Hardy, Concerns of Police Survivors; Kevin Lawrence, Texas Municipal Police Association; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris Jones, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; Jessica Anderson, Houston Police Department; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; James Jones, San Antonio Police Department; Jimmy Rodriguez, San Antonio Police Officers Association)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: John Helenberg, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement)
- BACKGROUND:** Observers note that it would be beneficial to establish a committee to help plan, facilitate, and oversee ceremonies held to honor Texas peace officers killed in the line of duty.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2820 would establish the Texas Peace Officers' Memorial Ceremony Committee to plan, oversee, and facilitate annual memorial ceremonies held to honor Texas peace officers who were killed in the line of duty, including an annual ceremony on the Capitol grounds. The committee would consist of:
- a president, or designee, of a law enforcement organization that met certain criteria listed in the bill;

- a surviving spouse of a peace officer killed in the line of duty selected by the Texas chapters of the Concerns of Police Survivors; and
- as nonvoting members, the governor, the lieutenant governor, the House speaker, the attorney general, the director of the Department of Public Safety, the executive director of the State Preservation Board, and the executive director of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

The annual memorial ceremony on the Capitol grounds would be held during the week of May 8 and would include the reading of the name of each peace officer who was being added to the monument that year and the recognition of surviving family members. In an odd-numbered year, the ceremony would include a parade of law enforcement color guards and personnel ending at the Capitol, and a ceremony held during a joint session of the Legislature on the House floor, if possible.

Private or public funds could be used to fund the ceremony.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

NOTES:

A companion bill, SB 1975 by Whitmire, was approved by the Senate on May 4.