

**SUBJECT:** Allocating 1 percent of mixed beverage tax to specialty court programs

**COMMITTEE:** Appropriations — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 23 ayes — Bonnen, M. González, Ashby, C. Bell, Capriglione, Dean, Dominguez, Gates, Holland, Howard, A. Johnson, Jarvis Johnson, Morrison, Raney, Rose, Schaefer, Stucky, E. Thompson, Toth, VanDeaver, Walle, Wilson, Wu

0 nays

4 absent — Julie Johnson, Minjarez, Sherman, Zwiener

**WITNESSES:** For — Julie Turnbull, Dallas District Attorney’s Office and Texas Association of Specialty Courts; Hank Judin and Peter Sakai, Texas Association of Specialty Courts; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Adam Haynes, Conference of Urban Counties; M Paige Williams, for Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot; Julie Wheeler, Travis County Commissioners Court)

Against — None

**BACKGROUND:** Local Government Code sec. 133.102 specifies that a portion of court fees paid by individuals convicted of a felony, class A or class B misdemeanor, or certain nonjailable misdemeanor offenses must be allocated by the comptroller to the specialty court account.

Some have suggested that specialty court programs have proven successful at rehabilitating nonviolent offenders and saving taxpayers money but that funding for such programs has not been consistent and creating a dedicated funding stream could help ensure that special court programs were sustainable.

**DIGEST:** HB 1256 would require the comptroller to deposit 1 percent of the mixed beverage gross receipts and sales taxes collected to the credit of the specialty court account. Money deposited to the account could be used

only to fund specialty court programs.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**NOTES:**

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of about \$20.3 million to general revenue related funds through fiscal 2023.