

SUBJECT: Expanding participation in comptroller's contracts for travel services

COMMITTEE: State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 12 ayes — Paddie, Hernandez, Deshotel, Harless, Howard, Hunter, P. King, Metcalf, Raymond, Shaheen, Slawson, Smithee

0 nays

1 absent — Lucio

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — Bobby Pounds, Comptroller of Public Accounts

BACKGROUND: Government Code sec. 2171.052 allows the central travel office of the comptroller to negotiate contracts with private travel agents, travel and transportation providers, and credit card companies that provide travel services and other benefits to the state. Sec. 2171.055 provides for the entities that may participate in the travel services contracts.

Some have suggested expressly authorizing qualified local entities, including local governments and workforce development boards, to purchase from the statewide travel services contracts.

DIGEST: HB 2894 would authorize an officer or employee of a qualified cooperative entity who was engaged in official business to participate in those contracts. The comptroller would have to adopt rules and make or amend contracts as necessary to administer the expanded authorization.

A "qualified cooperative entity" would include a local government, a community center for mental health and mental retardation services that received state grants-in-aid, an applicable assistance organization that received any state funds, and any corporate or political entity organized

under state law.

The bill also would remove the comptroller's authority to charge fees for participation in the contracts for travel services.

The 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, 2021.