

**SUBJECT:** Allowing political subdivisions to hire US permanent resident veterans

**COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security & Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — Guillen, Jarvis Johnson, Bowers, Dorazio, Goodwin, Harless, Troxclair

0 nays

2 absent — Canales, Holland

**WITNESSES:** For — Javier Salazar, Bexar County Sheriff's Office; Jessica Anderson, Houston Police Department; Stan Standridge, Texas Police Chiefs Association (*Registered, but did not testify*: Brie Franco, City of Austin; Clifford Sparks, City of Dallas; Guadalupe Cuellar, City of El Paso; TJ Patterson, City of Fort Worth; Nadia Islam, City of San Antonio; Jennifer Szimanski, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; Adam Haynes, Conference of Urban Counties; M Paige Williams, Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot; James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; Paul Sugg, Harris County Commissioners Court; David Batton, Harris County Deputies Organization FOP39; Mike Lee, Harris County Sheriff's Office; Ray Hunt, HPOU; Carlos Lopez, Wayne Mack, Jama Pantel, Justices of the Peace and Constables Association of Texas; James Smith, San Antonio Police Department; Carlos Ortiz, San Antonio Police Officers Association; Buddy Mills, Sheriff's Association of Texas; JJ Rocha, Texas Municipal League; Julie Wheeler, Travis County Commissioners Court; Jose Escribano, Travis County Constable Pct3; Susana Carranza)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: John Beauchamp, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement)

**BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that expanding eligibility for law enforcement

positions to certain U.S veterans could help mitigate officer shortages in the state.

DIGEST:

HB 1152 would authorize a political subdivision that appointed or employed a person to hold a position which required the person to be licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) to appoint or employ a legal permanent U.S. resident to hold the position if the resident was an honorably discharged U.S. armed forces veteran with at least two years of service before discharge and who held the appropriate license issued by TCOLE.

HB 1152 would amend the Occupations Code to require TCOLE to issue a license to such a person if they met the applicable requirements for the license under state law and TCOLE rules. The bill would amend the information TCOLE required to be obtained by a hiring law enforcement agency to include, as an alternative to U.S. citizenship, proof of the individual's legal permanent residence if the person was a honorably discharged veteran of the armed forces with at least two years of service before discharge.

The bill would require TCOLE to amend rules as necessary to comply with the bill no later than December 1, 2023. The changes made by the bill to the Occupations Code would apply only to the hiring of a person by a law enforcement agency that occurred on or after December 1, 2023.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.