

**SUBJECT:** Removing nepotism prohibitions for certain bus drivers

**COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 12 ayes — Buckley, Allen, Cunningham, Dutton, Cody Harris, Harrison, Hefner, Hinojosa, K. King, Longoria, Schaefer, Talarico

0 nays

1 absent — Allison

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Grover Campbell, TASB; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Bryce Adams, Texas Public Charter Schools Association; Dee Carney, Texas School Alliance)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Susan Stewart)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eric Marin and Marc Puig, Texas Education Agency)

**DIGEST:** HB 1789 would allow school district boards of trustees to exempt the appointment or employment of public school bus drivers from nepotism prohibitions if the board approved the appointment or employment. The bill only would apply to the appointment or employment of a person by a school district on or after the effective date of the bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 1789 would address bus driver shortages impacting school districts across the state by allowing the board of trustees to exempt a bus driver from nepotism laws. School districts, especially those in rural areas, need more flexibility when hiring. In some rural counties, school districts are the main source of employment, meaning it can be especially difficult to fully staff public schools while satisfying nepotism laws. Although there

are already helpful exemptions from nepotism laws for certain small counties, they do not apply to many school districts struggling to hire bus drivers. HB 1789 would widen the pool of bus driver candidates by expanding these exceptions.

CRITICS  
SAY:

No concerns identified.