

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2750
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Intergovernmental Relations
5-17-97
Engrossed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas state law does not authorize certain municipal firefighters and police officers additional wages for the use and fluency of an additional language skill other than English. Many firefighters and police officers have often responded to emergency calls on incidents which would require an additional language. In such cases, additional language skills become an essential tool in resolving the emergency situation. This bill would provide additional wages for the use and fluency of an additional language skill other than English to certain municipal firefighters and police officers additional wages.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 2750 provides additional wages for the use and fluency of an additional language skill other than English to certain municipal firefighters and police officers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 141, Local Government Code, by adding Subchapter C, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER C. ADDITIONAL WAGES FOR CERTAIN MUNICIPAL FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS

Sec. 141.051. DEFINITIONS. Defines "additional language skill," "firefighter," and "police officer."

Sec. 141.052. ENTITLEMENT TO ADDITIONAL WAGES FOR CERTAIN SERVICES. Authorizes a fire or police department to designate a firefighter or police officer as a bilingual interpreter. Provides that a firefighter or police officer who is designated as a bilingual interpreter under this section is entitled to appropriate additional wages under certain conditions.

Sec. 141.053. DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES. Requires a fire or police department that designates a firefighter or police officer as a bilingual interpreter under Section 141.052 to establish guidelines to determine certain conditions.

Sec. 141.054. CIVIL PENALTY. Provides that a department that fails to compensate a firefighter or police officer entitled and qualified to receive additional wages under this subchapter and the departmental guidelines established under Section 141.053 is liable to the firefighter or police officer for damages in the amount of lost wages plus interest at the rate of five percent per annum.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 141.113(c), Local Government Code, to require, rather than authorize the municipality's governing body to authorize assignment pay for bilingual personnel performing specialized functions as interpreters or translators in their respective departments.

SECTION 3. (a) Effective date, except as provided in Subsection (b): September 1, 1997.

(b) Effective date for Section 141.054, Local Government Code, as added by this Act: January 1, 1998.

(c) Makes application of Section 141.054, Local Government Code, as added by this Act, prospective.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.