

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 995
By: Harris
Criminal Justice
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is authorized to commission an honorably retired commissioned member of DPS and 300 other persons as special rangers. DPS generally commissions all of the eligible retirees as Special Texas Rangers. Of the current 500 retired persons commissioned as Special Rangers only about 50 have been Texas Rangers. Some retired DPS members, who were not Texas Rangers, feel uncomfortable about assuming such a status since they are most identifiable by their tenure as DPS officers. To allow a Texas Ranger, of which there are currently 105 active members, to retain a regular commission on honorable retirement would not be a major shift from the current procedure since the former Texas Rangers are currently commissioned as Special Rangers. This bill will provide new regulations regarding designation as a retired Texas Ranger, a special ranger, or a special department of public safety officer.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 995 provides new regulations regarding designation as a retired Texas Ranger, a special ranger, or a special department of public safety officer.

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 411B, Government Code, by adding Section 411.0211, as follows:

Sec. 411.0211. RETIRED TEXAS RANGERS. Provides that an honorably retired or retiring member of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) who has served at least 10 years as a Texas Ranger is entitled on application to DPS to retain the person's rank and commission as a Texas Ranger if certain conditions are met. Sets forth authority and duties of a Texas Ranger commissioned under this section. Requires DPS to revoke a Texas Ranger commission issued under this section under certain conditions.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 411.023, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 411.023. New heading: SPECIAL RANGERS AND SPECIAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS. Authorizes the Public Safety Commission to appoint as special department of public safety officers honorably retired commissioned officers of DPS and to appoint not more than 300 persons as special rangers. Prohibits a special ranger or special department of public safety officer from enforcing a law except one the violation of which is a criminal offense, rather than one designed to protect life and property. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 415.034(e), Government Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Authorizes DPS, if more than 300 persons serve as special rangers under Section 411.023, Government Code, on the effective date of this Act, to allow current members to serve until their commissions expire but DPS is prohibited from appointing or reappointing special rangers while the number of special rangers exceeds 300.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 6. Emergency clause.