

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 320
By: Wentworth
Jurisprudence
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

During the last legislative session, the jurisdiction of justice of the peace courts was amended to increase the maximum amount in controversy from \$5,000 to \$10,000. With jurisdiction over such sizeable claims, it has become crucial that those elected to preside be knowledgeable of the laws that they are entrusted to interpret.

As proposed, S.B. 320 would require a justice of the peace in a county with a population of 200,000 or more to be at least 25 years of age and licensed to practice law in this state. Current officeholders who do not qualify under the new requirements would be allowed to remain in office through the end of their current term.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 27, Government Code, by adding Section 27.0055 as follows:

Sec. 27.0055. QUALIFICATIONS OF JUSTICES OF CERTAIN COUNTIES. Requires a justice of the peace in a county with a population of 200,000 or more to be at least 25 years of age and licensed to practice law in this state.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.