

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R11232 DDT-F

H.B. 3357
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Business & Commerce
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Among the requirements of open meetings law is the requirement that certain governmental bodies post notice of meetings in a place readily accessible to the general public for a certain period of time prior to the meeting and to meet other requirements, including providing notice of a meeting to the appropriate county clerk. Interested parties have explained that the requirement to provide notice to the county clerk is particularly burdensome and suggest that posting meeting notices on a district's website instead would benefit both the public and the district because the public is more likely to look for meeting notices on the district's website than on a bulletin board at a county courthouse. The parties also point out that allowing a district to post notice on its website would be less burdensome than posting with the clerk's office, would save money, and would ensure that timely notice is provided. To achieve these objectives, H.B. 3357 seeks to allow certain governmental bodies to post meeting notices on a website.

H.B. 3357 amends current law relating to permitted methods for certain political subdivisions to post notice of a meeting.

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 Sections 551.053(a) and (c), Government Code, as follows:

(a) Requires the governing body of a water district or other district or political subdivision that extends into four or more counties to:

(1) and (2) Makes no change to these subdivisions;

(3) either provide notice of each meeting to the county clerk of the county in which the administrative office of the district or political subdivision is located or post notice of each meeting on the district's or political subdivision's Internet website.

(c) Requires a county clerk to post a notice provided to the clerk under Subsection (a)(3) on a bulletin board at a place convenient to the public in the county courthouse. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 551.054, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 551.054. DISTRICT OR POLITICAL SUBDIVISION EXTENDING INTO FEWER THAN FOUR COUNTIES: NOTICE TO PUBLIC AND COUNTY CLERKS; PLACE OF POSTING NOTICE. (a) Requires the governing body of a water district or other district or political subdivision that extends into fewer than four counties to:

(1) Makes no change to this subdivision;

(2) either provide notice of each meeting to the county clerk of the county in which the administrative office of the district or political subdivision is located or post notice of each meeting on the district's or political subdivision's Internet website.

(b) Requires a county clerk to post a notice provided to the clerk under Subsection (a)(2) on a bulletin board at a place convenient to the public in the county courthouse. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 3. Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies only to notice for a meeting held on or after the effective date of this Act. Provides that notice for a meeting held before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the notice is given, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2015.