

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1774  
By: Lucio III  
Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Concerned parties report that district and county courts at law in Cameron County have overloaded dockets and that certain types of proceedings on the dockets could be handled effectively by a criminal law hearing officer. The parties support expanding the jurisdiction of a criminal law hearing officer in Cameron County. H.B. 1774 seeks to address this important local priority.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1774 amends the Government Code to add presiding over an extradition proceeding under the Uniform Criminal Extradition Act to the actions for which a criminal law hearing officer in Cameron County has jurisdiction. The bill authorizes a criminal law hearing officer in Cameron County to accept a plea of guilty or nolo contendere and to determine whether a defendant is indigent and appoint counsel for an indigent defendant. The bill authorizes a district judge or a county court at law judge to refer to a criminal law hearing officer in Cameron County any criminal case for proceedings involving a bond forfeiture, the arraignment of defendants, the determination of whether a defendant is indigent and the appointment of counsel for an indigent defendant, and a negotiated plea of guilty or nolo contendere before the court.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.