

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 698  
By: King, Tracy O.  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties note that the misunderstanding of current law regulating the fitting and dispensing of hearing instruments by governmental entities and courts recently has resulted in confusion about the applicability of that law with respect to the sale of hearing instruments in Texas. H.B. 698 seeks to address this issue by clarifying the application of the law governing hearing instrument fitters and dispensers.

### **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. 698 amends the Occupations Code to limit the application of statutory provisions relating to hearing instrument fitters and dispensers to a person who engages or offers to engage in fitting and dispensing hearing instruments, except as otherwise provided. The bill prohibits a person from engaging or offering to engage in fitting and dispensing hearing instruments unless the person holds a license or permit issued under those provisions. The bill removes the prohibition against selling a hearing instrument by mail.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.