

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 799
By: Murr
Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties are concerned that justices of the peace in counties with no medical examiner lack the ability to request assistance in conducting inquest duties from other such justices. H.B. 799 seeks to address this issue by authorizing such requests.

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. 799 amends the Government Code to authorize the justice of the peace of the precinct in which a person's death occurs or the county judge, in a county that does not have a medical examiner's office or that is not part of a medical examiner's district, to request a justice of the peace of another such county to conduct an inquest into the person's death if a justice of the peace or the county judge serving the county in which the death occurred is not available to conduct the inquest. The bill requires a justice of the peace who on request conducts such an inquest, not later than the fifth day after the date the inquest is initiated, to transfer all information related to the inquest to the justice of the peace of the precinct in which the death occurred for final disposition of the matter. A justice of the peace who conducts such an inquest is not entitled to receive from the commissioners court of the county in which the death occurred any compensation, other than mileage, for conducting the inquest.

H.B. 799 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to authorize certain individuals required to give notice relating to deaths requiring an inquest in a county that does not have a medical examiner's office or that is not part of a medical examiner's district to ask the justice of the peace of the precinct in which a body or body part was found or the county judge to request a justice of the peace of another such county to conduct the inquest if a justice of the peace or the county judge serving the county in which the body or body part was found is not available to conduct the inquest. The bill requires the justice of the peace that conducts the inquest, not later than the fifth day after the date the inquest is initiated, to transfer all information related to the inquest to the justice of the peace of the precinct in which the body or body part was found for final disposition of the matter. The bill requires all expenses related to the inquest to be paid as provided by statutory provisions governing inquests upon dead bodies.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.