

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 978
By: Murr
Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that the Texas Indigent Defense Commission periodically experiences lengthy vacancies because board member term lengths do not reflect the time it takes to cultivate and vet qualified candidates. H.B. 978 seeks to address this issue by extending the term length for commission board members.

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. 978 amends the Government Code to extend the term length for the board members of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission from two years to six years, to specify that one or two members' terms expire February 1 of each odd-numbered year, and to remove a provision setting certain members' terms to expire in each even-numbered year. The bill authorizes the members serving on the bill's effective date to draw lots or use another method to determine the members who serve terms that expire on February 1, 2023, February 1, 2021, or February 1, 2019, and establishes that the board members appointed to succeed the members serving on the bill's effective date serve six-year terms.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.