

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2446
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Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted that firefighters and emergency medical services personnel are thrown into life or death situations where the emotions of people involved often run high. There are concerns that allowing sensitive information about such a first responder to be disclosed to a disgruntled individual could lead to a dangerous situation for the first responder and the responder's family. C.S.H.B. 2446 seeks to assuage those concerns by enacting certain privacy protections for firefighters, volunteer firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel.

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

C.S.H.B. 2446 amends the Government Code to except from the public availability requirement of state public information law information that relates to the home address, home telephone number, emergency contact information, or social security number of a firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or emergency medical services personnel and information that reveals whether such a person has family members, with certain exceptions. The bill makes a work schedule or a time sheet of such an individual confidential and excepted from that public availability requirement. The bill makes statutory provisions relating to the confidentiality of certain personal identifying information of peace officers and certain other officials performing sensitive governmental functions applicable to firefighters, volunteer firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel.

C.S.H.B. 2446 amends the Tax Code to make statutory provisions relating to the confidentiality of certain home address information in appraisal records applicable to a firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or emergency medical services personnel.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2446 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes a provision making a work schedule or a time sheet of a firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or emergency medical services personnel confidential and excepted from the public availability requirement of state public information law.