

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 703
By: Harris
Public Health
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised over the vulnerability of seniors when their birth records become public information after 75 years. Because a birth record can be used to establish a false identity and gain access to state and federal benefits, among other fraudulent activities, there have been calls to ensure that an individual's birth record may not become public while the individual is still alive. C.S.H.B. 703 seeks to better protect the identities of Texans by changing the time at which a birth record becomes public information to the 90th anniversary of the recorded date of birth.

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. 703 amends the Government Code to change the earliest date on which a birth record becomes public information and available to the public from the 75th anniversary of the date of birth as shown on the record filed with the vital statistics unit of the Department of State Health Services or local registration official to the 90th anniversary of that date.

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. 703 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 changes the proposed date on which a birth record becomes public information from the 125th anniversary of the date of birth to the 90th anniversary of the date of birth.