

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2309
By: Kolkhorst
Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that transferring jurisdiction over and management of the Star of the Republic Museum from Blinn College District to the Texas Historical Commission will allow the district to focus on its core educational mission while keeping the museum in good hands as the commission has the expertise and knowledge necessary to operate such a museum. S.B. 2309 seeks to address this issue by providing for such transfer.

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

S.B. 2309 amends the Government Code to establish that the Star of the Republic Museum and its contents are under the jurisdiction of the Texas Historical Commission and to make the commission responsible for the museum's preservation, maintenance, and operation. The bill establishes that, notwithstanding such jurisdiction and responsibility, Blinn College District maintains ownership of the museum, the land on which the museum is located, and the artifacts in the museum. The bill establishes that, except for such ownership, any power or duty related to the museum formerly vested in any other state agency or entity is vested solely in the commission. The bill requires the commission, in coordination with an advisory committee appointed by the board of trustees of the district, to promote the educational and public awareness programs at the museum, the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, and the Barrington Living History Farm. The bill authorizes the commission to accept a grant or donation for any program or purpose of the museum.

S.B. 2309 transfers the following to the commission on January 1, 2020:

- all powers and duties of the district relating to the museum;
- all unobligated and unexpended funds appropriated, donated, or contributed to the district designated for the administration of any part of the museum; and
- all files and other records of the district kept by the district regarding the museum.

The bill requires the district to continue to perform functions and activities related to the museum until January 1, 2020, and continues the former law in effect for that purpose.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.