

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1685  
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Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Due to the scarcity of qualified court reporters, it has been difficult to secure reasonably priced court reporting services on a consistent basis for the municipal courts in the City of San Antonio. In addition, the cost of installing and maintaining electronic recording devices in all three trial courtrooms is roughly half the cost of just one year's court reporter services. C.S.H.B. 1685 seeks to provide the City of San Antonio the authority to use an electronic recording device in the municipal court of record so as to achieve these substantial cost savings.

### **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. 1685 amends the Government Code to authorize the governing body of the City of San Antonio to authorize the use of a good quality electronic recording device to report court proceedings in cases tried before the municipal court. If the governing body authorizes an electronic recording, the court reporter is not required to be present to certify the reporter's record. The bill requires the recording to be kept for the 20-day period beginning the day after the last day of the court proceeding, trial, or denial of motion for new trial, whichever occurs last. The bill requires the proceedings to be transcribed from the recording by an official court reporter if the case is appealed.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 1685 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 entity granted authority to authorize the use of a good quality electronic recording device to report court proceedings from the clerk of the City of San Antonio's municipal courts of record to the city's governing body.