

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 297
By: Perry
Licensing & Administrative Procedures
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The passage of House Bill 1520 by the 86th Legislature required the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy to require each applicant for a certified public accountant (CPA) license to submit a complete and legible set of fingerprints to the board or to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information from DPS and the FBI. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions and the age and location of many licensees who needed to have fingerprints taken, the board has called for a one-year extension to complete the implementation of this requirement. Completing the fingerprinting requirement is most difficult for Texas CPAs living out-of-state and internationally, as there is limited access to approved electronic fingerprinting locations outside of Texas. S.B. 297 seeks to address this issue by providing additional time for the board to fulfill its requirement to fingerprint each CPA applicant for a license renewal.

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. 297 requires the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy to require, not later than September 1, 2022, each applicant for renewal of an accountant's license to first submit a complete and legible set of fingerprints to the board or to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) under certain conditions for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information from DPS and the FBI. The bill expressly does not require an applicant to submit the set of fingerprints until first required by the board.

S.B. 297 repeals Section 22(d), Chapter 181 (H.B. 1520), Acts of the 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.