

**SUBJECT:** Consolidating police management training at Sam Houston State University

**COMMITTEE:** Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — Oakley, Driver, Keel, Keffer, Madden, McClendon, Reyna

0 nays

2 absent — Carter, Olivo

**WITNESSES:** None

**BACKGROUND :** The Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute provides police management training for Texas peace officers. In 1993, the Texas Legislature transferred supervisory management of the Blackwood Institute to Sam Houston State University, which was officially designated as institute headquarters. The Legislature also directed that the institute be operated and managed as a joint program between Sam Houston State, Texas A&M University, and Texas Woman's University.

**DIGEST:** Under CSHB 3256, all training of police management personnel be administered on the campus of Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 1997.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** CSHB 3256 would consolidate training of police management personnel for the Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute at Sam Houston State University. Currently, comparable police management courses are offered at all the separate campuses included under the joint training agreement. However, economics of scale dictate that consolidating police management courses at three campuses to one would promote more efficient use of resources. The institute is already under the overall supervision and direction of the president of Sam Houston State, and it makes sense to consolidate programs there.

Consolidation would lower the total overhead costs, including expenses for building and classroom space and for instructors and associated personnel.

The Law Enforcement Institute is mandated by statute to cover the costs of room, board, and travel costs of Texas residents participating in its training program. Participants are all licensed police personnel and not necessarily students at the other state schools. Furthermore, a single central location for training would make it simpler and more convenient for students to obtain the proper course work and credit.

The campuses at College Station and in Denton would lose certain training classes from their semester class list, but would maintain their status as members of the joint program, and still have access to the institute's portable resources, such as training videos and audio tapes, as well as to the actual training headquarters at Huntsville.

OPPONENTS  
SAY:

Narrowing the availability of these police management courses to one locale in Huntsville would serve the needs of neither the public nor the participants in these training programs. During 1994-1995, approximately 560 persons received training at either Texas A&M campus or Texas Woman's University. In the case of TWU, which is located some 200 miles away from Huntsville, the obvious convenience offered by having regular training courses on campus is no small incentive for those who desiring to take this continuing education course. The fact that the institute would pay for travel costs and a motel room would not alleviate the hardship on families and time away from important duties for police management personnel in the Metroplex area or in central or southeast Texas. The loss of the training venues in Denton and College Station would cause real inconvenience and could actually prevent some persons from taking advantage of this useful training.

NOTES:

The original version of the bill would have eliminated the joint program at Texas A&M and Texas Woman's University.

HB 2617 by Oakley, also set on today's calendar for second reading, would increase funding for the Blackwood Institute by raising state court costs assessed persons convicted of criminal offenses.

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