

SUBJECT: Eligibility of certain counties to adopt a civil service system.

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — Committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — W. Smith, Bolton, Farabee, Heflin, Leibowitz, T. Smith
0 nays
3 absent — Naishtat, Coleman, Harless

WITNESSES: For — Cliff Black, Webb County Sheriff Rick Flores; Danny Valdez, Webb County
Against — None
On — Nathan R. Bratton, Webb County

BACKGROUND: Local Government Code, sec. 158.002 allows counties with populations of 200,000 or more to create a county civil service system.

DIGEST: CSHB 831 would lower the population requirement to establish a civil service system to 190,000.

The bill also would include sheriff's departments in the definition of "department," in Local Government Code, ch. 158.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

SUPPORTERS SAY: CSHB 831 would allow Webb County to establish a civil service system for all county government employees, including sheriff's departments. Webb County employees currently are at-will and cannot depend on the structure and security of employment that other government officials enjoy in populous areas of the state. The 2000 U.S. Census estimate for Webb County was 193,117. In 2005, the U.S. Census estimate was 224,695. While Webb County recently created a civil service commission, the 2000 U.S. Census renders the county ineligible to adopt a civil service system

under current law. Rather than wait until the 2010 U.S. Census estimates are released, this bill would propose a change in population criteria that, based on 2000 U.S. Census data, would add only Webb County to those eligible to establish a civil service system.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.