

- SUBJECT:** Creating a single online application for state jobs
- COMMITTEE:** Government Transparency and Operation — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Elkins, Walle, Galindo, Gonzales, Gutierrez, Leach, Scott Turner
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Paul D’Arcy, Indeed; Harrison Hiner, Texas State Employees Union; Joey Lozano
- Against — None
- On — Laurie Biscoe, Texas Workforce Commission; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Scott Eychner, Texas Workforce Commission)
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code, sec. 656.001 requires state agencies to list notice of employment openings with the Texas Workforce Commission.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 426 would direct the Texas Workforce Commission to create a single online application through which applicants could apply for jobs at any state agency.
- The Workforce Commission would be required to establish a common format for the job application and ensure that applicants could submit the online application and that agencies could receive it.
- State agencies would be required to accept applications submitted through the online process, although they also could continue accepting job applications submitted in another fashion.
- The bill would not apply to state institutions of higher education and university systems.

This bill would take effect September 1, 2015.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 426 is a common sense measure that would simplify the process of applying for jobs at state agencies. Agencies already are required to list job openings with the Texas Workforce Commission, which posts them on its website, WorkinTexas.org. However, agencies are not required to accept applications completed through the website, and many prefer to use their own application processes. This bill would allow agencies to continue using their own applications, but it would improve the commission's online application process and require agencies to accept applications submitted through Work in Texas.

The current requirement to submit different applications at each state agency is burdensome for applicants, particularly because the application process for state jobs is already time-consuming. In particular, applicants for positions at more than one agency repeatedly must provide their entire work histories, information that is used in each agency's hiring process. Workers with high-demand skills may not want to spend the time and effort needed to submit multiple applications to different state agencies.

By making it easier to apply for multiple jobs at once, the bill would help assemble a better pool of candidates from which agencies could select. With stiff competition for talent among employers in the private sector, the state must do whatever it can to ensure that agencies can attract talented and dedicated workers.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 426 would require state agencies to accept online job applications through the Texas Workforce Commission without taking steps to address deficiencies in the current online application process. For example, WorkinTexas.org lacks adequate filtering systems to ensure that applicants are qualified for the positions they seek. This can result in a flood of applications from less qualified candidates reaching hiring managers, who have difficulty discerning the truly qualified candidates who might be hiding in the pool. This has led many hiring managers to place greater emphasis on applications submitted directly to the agency, and it is unlikely that CSHB 426 would change this dynamic. The bill also

could require integration efforts on the part of agencies in order to accept applications from WorkinTexas.org, including translating entries from the Workforce Commission's database to the individual agencies' databases.