

SUBJECT: Allowing certain counties to increase compensation of a county auditor

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Coleman, Springer, Neave, Roberts, Thierry, Uresti

2 nays — Biedermann, Stickland

1 absent — Hunter

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 27 — 26-5 (Burton, Creighton, Hall, Kolkhorst, V. Taylor)

WITNESSES: No public hearing

BACKGROUND: Local Government Code, sec. 152.032(a) requires that a county auditor, with certain exceptions, not be compensated more than the county's highest paid elected official. Sec. 152.032(d) allows a county auditor in certain counties to be paid more than the compensation limits imposed by sec. 152.032(a) if the greater compensation is approved by the commissioners court of the county.

Concerns have been raised that in certain communities when the highest paid elected official leaves office, the county auditor could face a significant pay cut as the county auditor's pay is reduced to match the salary of the next highest-paid elected county official. This could hinder a county's ability to attract a highly qualified county auditor.

DIGEST: SB 1780 would allow a county with a population of more than 11,000 and less than 11,650 (Live Oak County) to compensate its county auditor at an amount greater than its highest paid elected official with the approval of the county's commissioners court.

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, 2017.