

- SUBJECT:** Creating the Texas Forensic Science Commission operating account
- COMMITTEE:** Appropriations — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 23 ayes — Zerwas, Longoria, Ashby, G. Bonnen, Cospers, Dean, Giddings, Gonzales, González, Howard, Koop, Miller, Muñoz, Perez, Phelan, Raney, Roberts, J. Rodriguez, Rose, Sheffield, Simmons, VanDeaver, Walle
- 0 nays
- 4 absent — Capriglione, S. Davis, Dukes, Wu
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 19 — 30-1 (Hall), on Local and Uncontested Calendar
- WITNESSES:** No public hearing
- BACKGROUND:** Code of Criminal Procedure, art. 38.01 establishes the Texas Forensic Science Commission. The commission’s duties include investigating allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct by forensic laboratories, conducting certain other investigations of forensic analysis to advance the integrity and reliability of forensic science in Texas, managing the crime laboratory accreditation program, and coordinating education and training programs on forensic science.
- Under Code of Criminal Procedure, art. 38.01, sec. 4-a, the commission also is responsible for licensing forensic analysts and has authority to set the fee for the license. All forensic analysts must be licensed beginning January 1, 2019.
- DIGEST:** SB 298 would create the Texas Forensic Science Commission operating account in the general revenue fund. The commission would be required to deposit to the credit of the account fees collected for the issuance or renewal of a forensic analyst license. Money in the account could be appropriated only to the commission for the administration and

enforcement of the article.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board's fiscal note, the license fees are expected to generate \$70,000 annually, beginning in fiscal 2019. The commission estimates that 700 forensic analysts would pay a fee of \$100 during the first year of licensing and that annual renewal fees of \$100 per licensee would be paid beginning in fiscal 2020.