

- SUBJECT:** Creating a grant program for body worn camera data storage costs
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — White, Bowers, Goodwin, Harless, Hefner, E. Morales, Patterson, Schaefer, Tinderholt
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Philip Mack Furlow, 106th Judicial District Attorney; Melissa Shannon, Bexar County Commissioners Court; Guadalupe Cuellar, City of El Paso; TJ Patterson, City of Fort Worth; Chris Jones and Charley Wilkison, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT); M. Paige Williams, Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot; Frederick Frazier, Dallas Police Association and FOP716 State FOP Director; James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; Daniel Collins, El Paso County; David Sinclair, Game Warden Peace Officers Association; Ender Reed, Harris County Commissioners Court; Jessica Anderson, Houston Police Department; Ray Hunt, HPOU; Noel Johnson, JPCA; Carlos Lopez and Jama Pantel, Justices of the Peace and Constables Association of Texas; James Smith, San Antonio Police Department; Brian Hawthorne, Sheriffs Association of Texas; Maggie Luna, Statewide Leadership Council; Sarah Reyes, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition; John Wilkerson, Texas Municipal Police Association; John Chancellor, Texas Police Chiefs Association; Julie Wheeler, Travis County Commissioners Court; Richard Bohnert; Thomas Parkinson; Michael Wolfe)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Cullen Grissom, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement)
- BACKGROUND:** Occupations Code sec. 1701.652 allows a police department, a sheriff of a county in Texas who has received the approval of the commissioners court for the purpose, or the Department of Public Safety to apply to the

Office of the Governor for a grant to defray the cost of implementing a body worn camera program and to equip peace officers with body worn cameras if that law enforcement agency employs officers who meet certain conditions.

Concerns have been raised about the potentially high costs of storing the footage from body worn police cameras, which can fluctuate significantly depending on how long the records are kept and how often officers have their cameras turned on. Some have called for grant resources to be made available specifically to address the costs relating to the storage of this footage.

DIGEST:

HB 1938 would allow a law enforcement agency in Texas that provided body worn cameras to its peace officers to apply to the office of the governor for a grant to defray the cost of data storage for recordings created with the body worn cameras. The grant program could be funded by federal funds or by gifts, grants, and donations.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.