

**SUBJECT:** Establishing TCOLE officers as state employees with certain benefits

**COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security & Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 6 ayes — Guillen, Bowers, Canales, Goodwin, Harless, Troxclair  
1 nay — Dorazio  
2 absent — Jarvis Johnson, Holland

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris Jones, Jennifer Szimanski, Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas; James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; Joe Morris, Game Warden Peace Officers Association; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; Carlos Ortiz, San Antonio Police Officers Association; Mitch Landry, Texas Municipal Police Association; AJ Louderback, Texas Sheriffs Regional Alliance; Linda Durnin)  
  
Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Angela Hale, City of McKinney; Elena Walch)  
  
On — John Beauchamp, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 654.011 establishes the position classification plan which applies, with the salary rates and provisions in the General Appropriations Act, to all hourly, part-time, temporary, and regular full-time salaried employments in the state departments, agencies, or judicial entities specified in the articles of the General Appropriations Act that appropriate money to certain agencies and the judiciary.  
  
Salary Schedule C establishes salary levels for state employees based on the employees' number of years of service.  
  
Some have suggested that peace officers employed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) should be compensated through the approved salary schedule to address the pay discrepancy

between TCOLE officers and other agencies' officers.

**DIGEST:** HB 2297 would include a TCOLE commissioned law enforcement officer under the definition of "state employee." A TCOLE law enforcement officer also would be included in the list of peace officers eligible for injury leave. The bill would apply only to an injury that occurred on or after its effective date.

The bill would require TCOLE to ensure that such a peace officer was compensated according to Schedule C of the position classification salary schedule prescribed by the General Appropriations Act. The classification officer in the office of the state auditor would classify the position of commissioned peace officer employed by TCOLE as a Schedule C position under the position classification plan. This change by the classification officer would apply beginning with the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2023. This provision would expire September 1, 2025.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.

**NOTES:** According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$1,035,590 to general revenue related funds for the biennium ending August 31, 2025.