

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1385
By: Haywood
Jurisprudence
4-3-97
Committee Report (Amended)

DIGEST

Currently, the law does not address the authority of the attorney general to use videoconferencing technology. Such technology is used by the federal courts for the holding of certain court hearings involving prison inmates. The state court system is presently studying the installation and use of such equipment. Use of such equipment is more efficient, saving travel time and travel expenses. This bill will authorize the office of the attorney general to use videoconferencing technology as a substitute for personal appearances in certain circumstances.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1385 authorizes the office of the attorney general to use videoconferencing technology as a substitute for personal appearances in certain circumstances.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 402B, Government Code, by adding Section 402.0213, as follows:

Sec. 402.0213. APPEARANCE THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCING TECHNOLOGY. Authorizes the office of the attorney general to use videoconferencing technology in certain circumstances. Defines "videoconferencing technology." Requires the attorney general to obtain the approval of the appropriate authority overseeing a proceeding under Subsection (a)(2) before using videoconferencing technology under this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

AMENDMENT 1.

Amends SECTION 1, on page 1, line 19, by adding the Subsection (c), as follows:

(c) The attorney general shall obtain the approval of the appropriate authority overseeing a proceeding under Subsection (a)(2) before using videoconferencing technology under this section.