

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.J.R. 71  
By: Homer (Ratliff)  
Intergovernmental Relations  
5/14/1999  
Committee Report (Amended)

### **DIGEST**

Currently, the Texas Constitution specifies three population categories which determine the minimum and maximum number of county justice of the peace precincts (precinct), with an exception for Chambers County. The upcoming census will require at least three counties to move into a higher category and will require one county to double its number of current precincts. These counties are rural and geographically small and doubling the numbers of precincts may create a financial burden on their budgets or cause unnecessary duplication of current services. H.J.R. 71 would require the submission to the voters of a constitutional amendment raising the population needed to create additional precincts.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, H.J.R. 71 requires the submission to the voters of a constitutional amendment raising the population needed to create additional precincts.

### **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 Section 18(a), Article V, Texas Constitution, to require each county in the state with a population of 50,000 or more, rather than 30,000 or more, to be divided into not less than four and not more than eight precincts. Requires each county in the state with a population of 18,000 or more but less than 50,000, rather than 30,000, to be divided into not less than two and not more than eight, rather than five, precincts. Requires Randall County, notwithstanding the population requirements of this subsection, to be divided into not less than two and not more than six precincts. Requires any county that is divided into four or more precincts on November 2, 1990, to continue to be divided into not less than four precincts, notwithstanding the population requirements of this subsection. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Requires this proposed constitutional amendment to be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 2, 1999. Sets forth the required language of the ballot.