

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1181  
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Criminal Justice  
5/11/2001  
Engrossed

**This analysis is based on the House Committee Report, which is the most recent version available to the Senate Research Center.**

### **DIGEST AND PURPOSE**

Members of juries in criminal trials are often susceptible to threats or intimidation. There have even been reports of instances in which jury members were so intimidated that the punishment phase of the trial by the jury was ended out of concern for the jurors' safety and as a result, the defendant was given a life sentence rather than a death sentence to avoid a mistrial. Under current law, penalties for harming or threatening a juror may not be sufficient to prevent these types of situations from occurring. H.B. 1181 increases the penalties for harming or threatening a juror.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1181 amends the Penal Code to provide that an offense of obstruction or retaliation is a second degree felony if the victim of the offense was harmed or threatened because of the victim's service or status as a juror.

Effective date: September 1, 2001.

Makes application of this Act prospective.