

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1748
By: Giddings (Barrientos)
Criminal Justice
5/11/2001
Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

During the interim, the Texas Senate Committee on Criminal Justice recommended the creation of an unsolved crimes investigation team (team) under the command of the chief of the Texas Rangers to take advantage of the advances in genetic and forensic sciences. The senate committee also recommended that the team investigate cold cases on a level of expertise that exceeds the capabilities of local law enforcement agencies. H.B. 1748 establishes an unsolved crimes investigation team.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 411, Government Code, by adding Subchapter J, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. UNSOLVED CRIMES INVESTIGATION TEAM

Sec. 411.261. DEFINITIONS. Defines “attorney representing the state” and “unsolved crime.”

Sec. 411.262. UNSOLVED CRIMES INVESTIGATION TEAM. Provides that the unsolved crimes investigation team is an investigatory unit within the Department of Public Safety (department). Provides that the team will be located at the headquarters of the Texas Rangers in Austin, Texas, and will be commanded by the chief of the Texas Rangers. Authorizes the director to employ commissioned peace officers and noncommissioned employees to perform duties required of the team. Provides that to be eligible for employment under this section, a peace officer must have not less than four years of experience as a peace officer and a degree from an accredited institution of higher education in law, accounting, or computer science, or two or more years of experience in the investigation of homicides or other major felonies. Requires a noncommissioned employee, in order to be eligible for employment under this section, to meet the experience, training, and educational qualifications set by the director as requirements for investigating or assisting in the investigation of an unsolved crime.

Sec. 411.263. ASSISTANCE ON REQUEST. Authorizes the unsolved crimes investigation team of the department to assist local law enforcement in the investigation of crime, on the request of an attorney representing the state and with the approval of the director.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2001.