

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1586
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Health & Human Services
3/29/2001
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Health information derived from birth and death records is the foundation of most public health programs. Vital event registrations are increasingly being used for both administrative and surveillance activities, as well as the more traditional role of proof of birth or death. Timely and accurate registrations are essential in providing such services. Vital registration has remained primarily a paper process since its inception in the early 1900s. Texas has changed from a rural state with a small population to an urban state with large, diverse populations. With the growth in population, the volume of birth and death records has climbed steadily. With that increase in volume, the number of requests for services such as obtaining certified copies, creating new records based upon adoptions or paternities, and correcting errors in original records have also increased dramatically. Compounding the volume problem have been new uses made of vital statistics. New systems must be created to handle the volume of records each year and enhance the capabilities to store and retrieve these records for meeting citizens' needs in a timely manner. As proposed, S.B. 1586 increases the fees collected for certified copies of birth and death certificates and sets up a fund in the state treasury to collect these funds to help pay for the enhanced needs of the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

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 Section 191.0045, Health and Safety Code, by amending Subsections (d)-(g) and adding Subsections (h) and (i), as follows:

- (d) Adds a reference to Subsection (h) relating to additional fees required.
- (e) Increases from \$2 to \$4 the amount of an additional fee collected for certificates.
- (f) Adds language to set forth requirements as to how the fees collected under Subsection (e) are to be deposited in the state treasury.
- (g) Makes a conforming change.
- (h) Requires the bureau of vital statistics, in addition to fees collected by the bureau under Subsections (b) and (e), to collect an additional \$1 fee for issuing a certified copy of a death certificate. Requires the fees to be deposited in the state treasury to the credit of the vital statistics enhancement fund.
- (i) Provides that the vital statistics enhancement fund is in the state treasury. Provides that money in the fund is derived from fees deposited as required by this section, Section 199.022(f), and Section 118.015(b) (relating to fees collected by county clerks for birth or death certificates), Local Government Code, and authorizes it to be used by the bureau only for

certain tasks.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 191.022(f), Health and Safety Code, to add a reference to the vital statistics enhancement fund and to add language requiring a local registrar who collects a fee for a certified copy of a death certificate to remit \$1 of that fee to the comptroller for deposit in the vital statistics enhancement fund.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 118.015(b), Local Government Code, to increase from 20 cents to 40 cents the amount deducted from the fee collected for a certified copy of a birth certificate and to change the amount remitted to the comptroller from \$1.80 to \$3.60. Makes a conforming change relating to county clerks.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2001.