

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1496
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Government Organization
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program has successfully restored and preserved many historic courthouses since the legislature created the program in 1999 and appropriated \$145 million over the past three biennia. Now the state needs to ensure that this investment of state funds is well-secured so that these courthouses never again fall into a state of disrepair. The Texas Historical Commission needs the authority and resources to help counties ensure the maintenance of their historic courthouses after they have completed work through the Courthouse Preservation Program.

As proposed, S.B. 1496 authorizes the Texas Historical Commission to develop and implement a program to ensure that counties which receive money for courthouse projects continue to maintain, repair, and preserve their courthouses to protect the investment of state funds. In order to fund this new maintenance program and pay administrative costs, the bill also authorizes the commission to receive two-and-one-half percent of the amount appropriated for the Courthouse Preservation Program.

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 442.0082, Government Code, to require the Texas Historical Commission (commission) to develop and implement a program to ensure that counties receiving funding for courthouse projects continue to maintain, repair, and preserve their courthouses so as to protect the investment of state monies. Requires the commission to provide periodic inspection and technical assistance, and to establish county maintenance reporting requirements.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 442.0083(f), Government Code, to prohibit biennial appropriations to the commission for administering the historic courthouse preservation and maintenance programs, rather than preservation program, during a state fiscal biennium from exceeding two and one half percent, rather than one percent, of the amount appropriated for implementing the historic courthouse preservation program during the state fiscal biennium.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2005.