

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R13209 UM-F

H.B. 3585
By: Pena (Van de Putte)
Criminal Justice
5/17/2007
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, the Texas statewide crime victim notification program is centrally managed by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), but requires two separate service contracts for each participating county. These contracts must be processed through more than 160 separate fiscal court meetings on an annual basis.

H.B. 3585 consolidates the administrative contracts for the Texas statewide automated victim notification program. The bill authorizes OAG to provide a single administrative contract with a vendor to provide the services for the counties. This will reduce the administrative cost of the program and greatly increase the efficiency of the state and county personnel who manage the contracting processes for this service. This model is currently used by 28 other states that offer similar statewide automated victim notification programs.

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 Article 56.541(e), Code of Criminal Procedure, to add a contract described by Article 56.16 to the list of grants and contracts for which the attorney general is authorized to use money appropriated from the compensation to victims of crime fund.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 56, Code of Criminal Procedure, by adding Article 56.16, as follows:

Art. 56.16. VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM. (a) Requires the attorney general to operate, through a service contract with a third party, a statewide automated victim notification system. Requires the attorney general to operate the system in a manner that allows counties of this state and state agencies providing services to victims, guardians of victims, or close relatives of deceased victims to access the system without entering into any contract with the third party with which the attorney general has a service contract.

(b) Requires the system operated under Subsection (a) to provide certain information to counties and state agencies.

(c) Provides that this article does not create a cause of action against the state or a state agency, official, or employee.

SECTION 3. Requires the office of the attorney general, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act and in accordance with the terms of the contract, to amend any existing contract with a third party for the provision of a statewide automated victim notification system to comply with Article 56.16, Code of Criminal Procedure, as added by this Act.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2007.