

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 601
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Historically, labor organizations that represent peace officers provide legal representation, handle grievances, and negotiate with public employers for their members. These organizations also participate in the political process by raising money for political action committees and endorsing candidates. Dues paid by members or the organization primarily fund these activities. Peace officers are required to receive training mandated by the Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. Regional police academies, universities, and law enforcement agencies have historically provided this training. Some peace officer organizations have now begun to provide this training and have sought and been awarded funding from state agency grants.

Serious questions have been raised about the use of state tax dollars to fund the activities of these peace officer organizations. This issue has also brought about ethical questions relating to the state providing funds to organizations that are involved in the political process.

As proposed, S.B. 601 prohibits a state agency from distributing any money under its control to a peace officer organization that is required to register with the Texas Ethics Commission, employs lobbyists, or provides legal representation to its members.

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 614, Government Code, by adding Subchapter H, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER H. GRANTS TO PEACE OFFICER ORGANIZATIONS

Sec. 614.151. DEFINITIONS. Defines "appropriated money," "peace officer organization," and "state agency."

Sec. 614.152. RESTRICTION ON GRANT-MAKING. Prohibits a state agency from using any money under the agency's control to make a grant or other distribution to a peace officer organization if the organization or employee thereof is required to register under Chapter 305 (Registration of Lobbyist); employs a person for the purpose of affecting the outcome of legislation, agency rules, ordinances, or other governmental policies; or provides legal representation to its members.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.