

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1775
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

For more than 50 years, sports officials have independently contracted with Texas school districts to provide officiating services for high school sporting events throughout the state. Sports officials have never been employed by, paid by, or under the authority of the University Interscholastic League (UIL). Recently, UIL sought to create a UIL sports officials department and to require Texas school districts to utilize only sports officials registered with and under the regulatory oversight of the new department and there is concern that, without legislative guidance, such an arrangement will interfere with the independent nature of the profession.

H.B. 1775 amends current law relating to the authority of the University Interscholastic League regarding activities involving sports officials.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the University Interscholastic League in SECTION 1 (Section 33.085, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter D, Chapter 33, Education Code, by adding Section 33.085, as follows:

Sec. 33.085. **AUTHORITY OF UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE REGARDING ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SPORTS OFFICIALS.** (a) Defines "league" and "sports official" in this section.

(b) Authorizes the University Interscholastic League (UIL) to require a sports official, as a condition of eligibility to officiate a contest sponsored by UIL, to:

(1) be registered with UIL and comply with the registration requirements of Subsection (c);

(2) have completed initial and continuing education programs regarding UIL rules;

(3) be a member in good standing of a local chapter or association of sports officials recognized by UIL for that purpose; and

(4) agree to abide by UIL rules, including fee schedules and travel reimbursement guidelines for payment by school districts or open-enrollment charter schools to a sports official.

(c) Requires a sports official, in registering with UIL, to be required to provide directory information required by UIL and submit to a criminal background check.

(d) Prohibits UIL from charging a sports official who completes a program under Subsection (b)(2) a fee for more than one program described by Subsection (b)(2).

(e) Authorizes UIL to charge and collect a registration fee only to defray the cost of registering sports officials and requires UIL to post the amount of the fee on UIL's Internet website and make the information available at other places UIL determines appropriate. Prohibits the amount of the fee from exceeding the amount reasonably determined by UIL to be necessary to cover the cost of administering registration.

(f) Authorizes UIL to revoke or suspend the UIL registration of a sports official determined by UIL to have violated the provisions of the UIL constitution or contest rules governing sports officials or other league policy applicable to sports officials. Requires UIL, before UIL is authorized to take action to revoke or suspend a sports official's registration, to notify and consult with the local chapter or association of sports officials of which the sports official is a member. Authorizes the local chapter or association to, on or before the 15th day after the date notice is received from the league, take action to adjudicate the alleged violation. Authorizes UIL, if after the 15th day after the date notice is received from UIL the local chapter or association has failed to take action against the sports official or takes action that UIL finds to be insufficient, to take action against the sports official. Requires UIL to adopt rules to provide a sports official with the opportunity for an appeals process before the league revokes or suspends the sports official's registration. Requires UIL, in adopting rules under this subsection, to make a determination of the actions and subsequent sanctions that would be considered sufficient under this subsection.

(g) Prohibits UIL from sponsoring or organizing or attempting to sponsor or organize any association of sports officials in which the majority of the membership is composed of sports officials who officiate team sports.

(h) Authorizes UIL to set rates or fee schedules payable by a school district or open-enrollment charter school to a sports official.

(i) Requires UIL, before UIL is authorized to take any action that amends rules related to the activities of sports officials, other than an action against an individual sports official under Subsection (f), to submit the proposed action for public review and comment, including:

(1) notifying registered sports officials of the proposed action by e-mail not later than the 30th day before the date set for action on the proposal; and

(2) posting the proposal on UIL's Internet website for at least 30 consecutive days before the date set for action on the proposal.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.