

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R4717 SCL-F

H.B. 712
By: Murphy (Patrick)
Intergovernmental Relations
4/18/2013
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current state law authorizes certain counties to provide fire-fighting equipment to volunteer fire departments and municipalities that petition to receive the equipment but requires a county providing such equipment to keep the equipment in good working order and to make all necessary repairs or replacements. Interested parties contend that this requirement places a continuing burden on the county for the service life of the equipment, and since there is no defined end to equipment service life, the county obligation could extend far beyond the equipment's originally anticipated service life. Furthermore, parties contend that a question of county liability may arise if a repair is not made and damage results from the lack of repair.

H.B. 712 seeks to bring the law in line with historical practice by making the entity that petitions for and receives the donated equipment responsible for all repairs and maintenance, including parts and labor. Other entities could benefit from this change by allowing a county to procure equipment for those other entities without the burden of responsibility for the equipment's maintenance and repair.

H.B. 712 amends current law relating to the responsibility for keeping fire-fighting equipment furnished to a volunteer fire department by a county in good working order.

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 352.005(e), Local Government Code, as follows:

(e) Requires the petitioner, rather than the county, to keep the fire-fighting equipment in good working order, make all necessary repairs or replacements, and provide labor and materials for repairs. Deletes existing text requiring the commissioners court to determine if a repair or replacement is necessary and require that repair work, including labor and materials, be provided as much as possible by the court's shops that it designates. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2013.