

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1278
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State Affairs
5/15/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law provides for the payment of certain financial assistance benefits to the survivors of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and certain other public employees killed in the line of duty. The lump sum benefit paid to survivors has not increased in over a decade and the monthly benefit for surviving children has not increased in approximately four decades. H.B. 1278 seeks to provide reasonable increases in these benefits to continue to meet the rising cost of inflation and to continue to provide for the families of those public servants who sacrificed their lives serving their communities.

H.B. 1278 amends current law relating to financial assistance paid to the survivors of certain law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public employees killed in the line of duty.

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 615.022, Government Code, to increase from \$250,000 to \$500,000 the amount of financial assistance the state is required to pay to the eligible surviving spouse of certain law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public employees killed in the line of duty, to such an employee's surviving children in equal shares if there is no eligible surviving spouse, or to such an employee's surviving parents in equal shares if there is no eligible surviving spouse or child.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 615.023(a) and (b), Government Code, to increase the monthly payment the state is required to pay to the duly appointed or qualified guardian or other legal representative of such an employee's eligible surviving minor child from \$200 to \$400 if there is one surviving child, from \$300 to \$600 if there are two surviving children, and from \$400 to \$800 if there are three or more surviving children, and to provide that a child's entitlement to assistance payable under this section ends on the last day of the month that includes the child's 18th birthday.

SECTION 3. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act apply in relation to a payment of assistance made to survivors of certain public servants on or after the effective date of this Act regardless of the date the death of the public servant occurs.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2015.