

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 866
By: Taylor, Larry
Intergovernmental Relations
6/18/2015
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Unregulated game rooms can often be mediums for illegal activity and lead to decreased public safety. In addition, some game room operators have reportedly set up redemption machines to give cash prizes, violating the law. In an effort to monitor and control this kind of activity, some counties have pursued the authority to regulate game rooms. Last session, Harris County was granted this ability. As a result, some illegal game rooms in Harris County have relocated operations in adjacent counties, including Galveston County. S.B. 866 grants Galveston County the authority to regulate game rooms and standardizes the statute, putting the counties with this authority under the same section.

S.B. 866 amends current law relating to the regulation of amusement redemption machine game rooms in certain counties.

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 234.131(2), Local Government Code, as added by Chapter 1284 (H.B. 2123), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, to redefine "game room."

SECTION 2. Amends Section 234.132, Local Government Code, as added by Chapter 1284 (H.B. 2123), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, as follows:

Sec. 234.132. **APPLICABILITY.** Provides that this subchapter applies only to:

- (1) a county that has a population of less than 25,000, is adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico, and is within 50 miles of an international border;
- (2) a county that has a population of four million or more;
- (3) a county that is adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico and to a county that has a population of four million or more; and
- (4) a county located on the Texas-Mexico border that has a population of less than 300,000 and contains a municipality with a population of 200,000 or more.

Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Sections 234.136(a) and (b), Local Government Code, as added by Chapter 1284 (H.B. 2123), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, as follows:

- (a) Authorizes a peace officer or county employee to inspect a business in the county to determine the number of amusement redemption machines or machines described by Section 234.131(2)(B) (redefining "game room") subject to regulation under this subchapter that are located on the premises of the business.

(b) Authorizes a peace officer or county employee to inspect any business in which six or more amusement redemption machines or machines described by Section 234.131(2)(B) are located to determine whether the business is in compliance with this subchapter or regulations adopted under this subchapter.

SECTION 4. Repealer: Subchapter E (Game Rooms), Chapter 234 (County Regulation of Businesses and Occupations), Local Government Code, as added by Chapter 1377 (H.B. 1127), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2015.