

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R3273 AAF-D

H.B. 297
By: Bell et al. (West)
Criminal Justice
5/17/2017
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day was founded in 2015 as a tribute to the men and women across America who have made the sworn commitment to protect and serve our communities; sometimes at all costs. Among the organizations that were part of the inaugural event observed annually on January 9 were the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Law Enforcement United, the Fraternal Order of Police, the FBI National Academy Associates, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S) and the Officer Down Memorial Page among others.

Under H.B. 297, Texas will join the growing list of entities who observe the national event by designating January 9 as Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in Texas. On C.O.P.S. website is a listing which details how citizens and show their support for Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. Those activities include:

- Wearing blue clothing in support of law enforcement.
- Sending a card of support to your local police department or state agency.
- Sharing a story about a positive law enforcement experience on social media.
- Asking children in your community to write letters in support of law enforcement.
- Participating in Project Blue Light - Proudly display your blue light in support of enforcement.
- Organizing an event or a rally in support of your law enforcement officers.

H.B. 297 calls for Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in Texas to be observed in public schools and other places and requires the Texas Education Agency to develop recommendations for "appropriate" activities that would take place on that day.

H.B. 297's author says that H.B. 297 was inspired by the tragic events of July 7, 2016, that took place in downtown Dallas.

H.B. 297 amends current law relating to the designation of January 9 as Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

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 Subchapter C, Chapter 662, Government Code, by adding Section 662.065, as follows:

Sec. 662.065. LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY. (a) Provides that January 9 is Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.

(b) Authorizes Law Enforcement Appreciation Day to be regularly observed in public schools and other places. Requires the Texas Education Agency to develop recommendations for the observation of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day through appropriate activities in the public schools.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.