

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 988
By: Zaffirini
Business & Commerce
6/9/2017
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

An unintended quirk in current law prevents county judges from participating via videoconference in commissioners court meetings. County judges currently are required to preside over meetings in which they participate, but Texas' videoconferencing law requires the person presiding over a meeting to be present at a physical location accessible to the public. As a result, county judges cannot participate via videoconference, while county commissioners and members of other governmental bodies can do so.

S.B. 988 addresses the problem by clarifying that the statute requiring the county judge to preside over meetings does not apply to meetings at which the judge participates via videoconference. This would ensure that a county judge has the opportunity to participate remotely via videoconference while another member of the commissioners court presides over the meeting at the physical location accessible to the public.

S.B. 988 amends current law relating to the participation of a county judge in a meeting of a commissioners court conducted by videoconference call.

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 81.001(b), Local Government Code, to provide that this subsection does not apply to a meeting held under Section 551.127 (Videoconference Call), Government Code, if the county judge is not located at the physical space made available to the public for the meeting.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.