



RATLIFF COMPANY

1504 SAN ANTONIO
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

HON. THOMAS RATLIFF
RANDY ELLISTON

AUSTIN OFFICE:
TEL (512) 415-9975
WWW.RATCO.NET

April 13, 2021

TO: DPROA, David Elliston, Sally Lannom, Boux Bland, and Ken Seguin

FROM: Randy Elliston

SUBJECT: Legislative Update

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 87th session of the Texas Legislature since last report has really picked up speed. The primary change since last report for DPROA is the filing of HB-3375 on March 9, 2021 by Representative Yvonne Davis of Dallas. This bill as I am sure you are aware is "Relating to certain benefits payable by the public retirement systems for police and fire fighters in certain municipalities". More information regarding this bill is provided below:

Pension Legislation of Interest:

I am now watching three bills that may be of interest to DPROA.

HB 805 By Huberty

Relating to certain increases in benefits under the firefighters' relief and retirement fund in certain municipalities.

This bill was filed on December 11, 2020 and read the first time and referred to House Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Committee on March 1, 2021.

<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=HB805>

HB 3375 By Davis

Relating to certain benefits payable by the public retirement systems for police and fire fighters in certain municipalities.

This bill was filed on March 9, 2021 and read the first time and referred to House Pensions, Investments & Financial Services Committee on March 22, 2021. It would have significant impact on how your DROP funds could be distributed and the inclusion of surviving spouses to apply for an emergency or financial hardship distributions from the DROP account. It is now scheduled for public hearing in committee on April 16, 2021. The committee chaired by Rep. Rafael Anchia will convene on the 16th at 8:00 AM in room E2-030 of the Capitol Extension. See link below for full text:

<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=HB3375>

SJR 22 By Huffman

Proposing a constitutional amendment prohibiting the use of state funds to pay for the obligations of a local public retirement system.

<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=SJR22>

This bill is Co-authored by Senator Schwertner and now has been referred to Senate Finance Senate Finance Committee. As of this writing it has not been scheduled for hearing. We saw this same SJR from Senator Huffman last session. It moved through the process and was placed on the intent calendar. It picked up three Co-Authors, Creighton, Hall and Campbell, was read the 2nd time and passed to engrossment but was not placed on the intent calendar again.

Other Legislation of Interest:**SB 198 By Nelson**

Relating to the demonstration of weapons proficiency by qualified retired law enforcement officers.

<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=SB198>

This bill basically allows a retired law enforcement officer who is qualified to carry a firearm under the federal LEOSA statute to be able to demonstrate “qualify” weapons proficiency to a qualified handgun instructor as defined in this statute. This will mean an officer doesn’t have to return to the agency they retired from and potentially travel great distances to qualify and get their credentials. Texas Commission on Law Enforcement will issue credentials under this bill.

As expected this bill past out of Senate State Affairs Committee and placed on local and uncontested calendar. It then was passed by the Senate and sent to the House. I don’t expect any opposition to the passing of this bill.

Public Access to House Committee Meetings Health and Safety Protocols 87th Legislature

The House has less restrictive rules for attending hearings, see link below:

<https://house.texas.gov/committees/public-access-house-committee-meetings/>

Please let me know, if you have any comments or questions.

Randy Elliston, Government Affairs Consultant
Ratliff Company
500 West 13th Street
Austin, Tx 78701
Cell: 512-415-9975

Randy Elliston is a retired Chief of the Texas Highway Patrol with over 35 years of experience in Texas State Government Relations. He is now a member of the Ratliff Company team representing clients in areas of public safety, law enforcement, transportation and state administrative processes.