

HCS HB 2600 -- AMBULANCE DISTRICTS (Farnan)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Local Government

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2600.

Currently, county commissions divide newly-formed ambulance districts into six subdistricts for the election of members to the district's board of directors.

This bill allows county commissions to choose between the above-mentioned district plan or for the election of an at-large board of directors. Members of the board must be elected at a regularly scheduled election date.

The bill allows an ambulance district, by a vote of 2/3 approval of the board of directors, to abolish the boundaries of its existing subdistricts if the board is unable to find a qualified candidate to fill each subdistrict position. This must occur after a public hearing.

The bill allows an ambulance to establish subdistricts by a vote of 2/3 approval of the board of directors. The boundaries of the subdistricts will be established by the county commission.

Currently, six-member ambulance district boards can adopt a resolution changing the size of the board to seven, with one board member running district wide, or decreased to five, or three members. This bill requires such a resolution to name any vacancy to be filled at a subsequent election, if the size of the board is increasing. If the size is decreasing, all existing board members will complete their terms.

This bill requires county commissions, upon written request of a majority of the remaining members of the ambulance board, to fill vacancies on the board by appointment within 30 calendar days.

Currently, if a question of annexation is submitted to voters and approved, the county commission declares by order the territory annexed. This bill requires the county commission to do this within 30 days of the filing of the petition.

The bill requires the Department of Health and Senior Services to prioritize and expedite any activities necessary to facilitate the consolidation of ambulance districts once the consolidation has been approved by voters.

This bill describes the necessary criteria that must be included on every petition or resolution calling for an ambulance district consolidation, as provided in the bill. The consolidation plan must be filed with the county clerk and presented to the county commission.

Notice of intent to consolidate is required to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in every county in which the consolidated district will be located. A joint public hearing will be held within 30 days after the date of the second publication. The bill details the formatting of the notice of intent.

Currently, consolidation of an ambulance district is only permissible if approved by voters. This bill requires a public vote on the consolidation if an objection is filed. If no objection is filed within 30 days of the public hearing, the county commission will order the districts consolidated. Objections must be signed by no less than 5% of the votes cast for governor in the most recent gubernatorial election in the district.

A consolidated district can impose an initial tax levy up to the highest tax levy of the consolidating districts, provided the levy is specifically set forth in the ballot language and submitted to and approved by voters. If no vote occurs, the consolidated district can impose a tax equal to the lowest of any existing property or sales tax rate of the districts to be consolidated.

All assets and obligations of the existing ambulance districts will become assets and obligations of the consolidated district.

This bill is similar to SB 975 (2026).