

By: Johnson

H.B. No. 154

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a prohibition on certain law enforcement inquiries regarding the nationality or immigration status of a victim of or witness to a criminal offense.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Article 2.13, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended by adding Subsections (d) and (e) to read as follows:

(d) Subject to Subsection (e), in the course of investigating an alleged criminal offense, a peace officer may inquire as to the nationality or immigration status of a victim of or witness to the offense only if the officer determines that the inquiry is necessary to:

(1) investigate the offense; or

(2) provide the victim or witness with information about federal visas designed to protect individuals providing assistance to law enforcement.

(e) Subsection (d) does not prevent a peace officer from:

(1) conducting a separate investigation of any other alleged criminal offense; or

(2) inquiring as to the nationality or immigration status of a victim of or witness to a criminal offense if the officer has probable cause to believe that the victim or witness has engaged in specific conduct constituting a separate criminal offense.

1           SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.