

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1083
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Corrections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Informed observers note that many inmates in Texas are housed in several categories of solitary confinement, including individuals that may have serious mental illnesses. There is growing concern among these observers that rates of suicide, attempted suicide, and self-harm in solitary confinement are far higher than rates in the general population. Indications are that most mental health experts agree solitary confinement can worsen the condition of individuals with mental illnesses. Furthermore, those concerned explain that inadequate monitoring and cursory checks while in solitary confinement do not allow for serious mental health issues to be identified. H.B. 1083 seeks to remedy this situation by providing for a mental health assessment of certain inmates.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1083 amends the Government Code to require an appropriate medical or mental health care professional to perform a mental health assessment of an inmate before the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) may confine the inmate in administrative segregation. The bill prohibits TDCJ from confining an inmate in administrative segregation if the mental health assessment indicates that type of confinement is not appropriate for the inmate's medical or mental health.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.