

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 954  
By: Dutton  
Corrections  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) has authorized more than 100 alternative housing facilities for parolees in Houston. Concerns have been raised that stakeholders do not have a role in TDCJ approval of alternative housing facilities, despite local ordinances that may set out public safety criteria for these facilities. Instead, local governments can only obtain location and occupancy data for TDCJ-approved facilities through a cumbersome public information request process. Otherwise, these local governments have no knowledge of these approved facilities or parolee placement, which prohibits them from addressing complaints from residents regarding overcrowded or nuisance locations that may be housing parolees. Building safety for those living in and around these facilities is paramount and warrants a change in state law to allow easier access to information regarding these facilities. H.B. 954 seeks to address this by requiring operators of and applicants seeking to provide alternative housing to submit documentation of compliance with municipal and county regulations and by requiring TDCJ to facilitate the provision of information on such facilities.

### **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. 954 amends the Government Code to prohibit the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) from entering into a lease or contract with an operator of an alternative housing facility that is located in a county with a population of 3.3 million or more unless the operator submits to TBCJ a permit or other documentation showing that the facility is in compliance with all applicable municipal and county regulations.

H.B. 954 requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to require an applicant seeking to participate as a provider in a program designed to provide alternative housing for two or more unrelated releasees in a county with a population of 3.3 million or more to submit with the application a permit or other documentation showing that the proposed alternative housing facility is in compliance with all applicable municipal and county regulations. The bill sets out information TDCJ is required to maintain regarding facilities providing such housing and releasees housed at the facilities and requires TDCJ, on request of a county or municipality, to provide that information monthly by secured email and in a machine-readable format. If a county or municipality does not want to continue to receive the information, the county or municipality

is required to notify TDCJ. The bill requires TDCJ to provide the information set out by the bill to a member of the legislature on request.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.