

SUBJECT: Modifying reentry and reintegration programs provided by TDCJ

COMMITTEE: Corrections — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Murr, Allen, Bailes, Rodriguez, Sherman, Slaton

0 nays

3 absent — Burrows, Martinez Fischer, White

WITNESSES: For — Koretta Brown and Robert Williams, Alliance For A New Justice System; Brian Middleton, Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office; Jennifer Deleon, Statewide Leadership Counsel; Charlie Malouff; Charles Roberts; Albert Yancey; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Terra Tucker, Alliance for Safety and Justice; Warren Burkley, Austin Justice Coalition; Kathy Mitchell, Just Liberty; Karen Munoz and Jorge Renaud, LatinoJustice; Matthew Lovitt, National Alliance on Mental Illness Texas; Maggie Luna, Statewide Leadership Council; Savannah Eldrige, Statewide Leadership Council, Be Frank 4 Justice, National Freedom Movement; Rachana Chhin, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; and 15 individuals.

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: April Zamora, Texas Department of Criminal Justice)

BACKGROUND: Government Code sec. 501.092 governs the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) reentry and reintegration plan, specifying certain requirements for the plan, including providing for programs that address the assessed needs of offenders and providing for a comprehensive network of transition programs to address the needs of offenders released or discharged from a correctional facility. Such programs must provide offenders with:

- individualized case management and a full continuum of care;

- certain life skills training;
- education or special education if applicable;
- employment training;
- appropriate treatment programs; and
- parenting and relationship building classes.

Interested parties have suggested that providing reentry and reintegration programs to offenders for a longer period of time could benefit offenders and could reduce recidivism.

DIGEST:

CSHB 2742 would modify requirements of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) reentry and reintegration plan. The plan would have to:

- require that the programs addressing the assessed needs of offenders begin as soon as practicable after the offender was taken into the custody of TDCJ; and
- provide for a comprehensive network of transition programs to address the needs of offenders, including following the completion of a period of parole or mandatory supervision.

The bill would require such programs to include information about the development of prosocial behavior and positive relationships in the life skills training provided to offenders. Such programs also would have to provide offenders with spiritual guidance, if requested by the offender.

The bill would remove the requirements of such programs to provide offenders with employment training, appropriate treatment programs, and parenting and relationship building classes.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.