

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R429 GWK-D

S.B. 258
By: West
Criminal Justice
2/26/1999
As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas law does not consider prisoners of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to be “employees” for purposes of the Texas Hazard Communication Act, Chapter 502 of the Health and Safety Code. Thus, state prison inmates are not statutorily required to be informed about and trained in using hazardous chemicals in their workplace. There are approximately 55,000 offenders who have direct contact with chemicals requiring Hazard Communication Act training. This figure represents offenders assigned to industry, food service, laundry, maintenance, agriculture, and support service inmate orderly duties. S.B. 258 would amend the definition of “employee” in the Texas Hazard Communication Act to ensure that the Act is applicable to prison inmates.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 258 authorizes applicability of the Hazard Communication Act to certain inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 502.003(10), Health and Safety Code, to redefine “employee” as a person who may be or may have been exposed to hazardous chemicals, and includes a person imprisoned in a facility operated by or for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and working as a condition of the person’s sentence.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.