

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.H.B. 1563
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Education
5/16/2007
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Under current law, school districts are not authorized to issue high school diplomas posthumously to students who attended high school in the district and were victims of a criminal homicide during the school year. Jennifer Crecente was killed by her boyfriend in South Austin on February 15, 2006. Jennifer was a student at Bowie High School who had aspirations to become a psychiatrist and who loved to take photographs. Three months after her death, with her graduation day approaching, the Crecente family received a certificate for Jennifer's 12 years of work and dedication in furthering her education. Unfortunately, students who have died before completing all required courses are not eligible to be awarded a high school diploma. The Crecente family has had difficulty coping with Jennifer's death, and they have tried to obtain her high school diploma to honor Jennifer's desire to pursue her goal to become a psychiatrist.

C.S.H.B. 1563 requires a school district, on request of the student's parent, to issue a high school diploma posthumously to each student who attended high school in the district during the 2005-2006 school year at grade level 12 and who was the victim of criminal homicide during that school year.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.0254, as follows:

Sec. 28.0254. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS. (a) Requires a school district to issue a high school diploma, on request of the student's parent, posthumously to each student who died while enrolled in the district at grade level 12, provided that the student was academically on track at the time of death to receive a diploma at the end of the school year in which the student died, notwithstanding any other provision of this code. Defines "school year" for purposes of this section.

(b) Provides that a school district is not required to issue a high school diploma to a student described by Subsection (a) if the student at any time before the student's death was convicted of a felony offense under Title 5 (Offenses Against the Person) or 6 (Offenses Against the Family), Penal Code, or adjudicated as having engaged in conduct constituting a felony offense under Title 5 (Offenses Against the Person) or 6 (Offenses Against the Family), Penal Code.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 28.0254, Education Code, as added by this Act, to provide that this section applies beginning with students enrolled at grade level 12 during the 2005-2006 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.