

- SUBJECT:** Redefining TYC's Prison Industry Advisory Committee
- COMMITTEE:** Corrections — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Haggerty, Allen, Culberson, Ellis, Gray, Lengefeld, Longoria
0 nays
2 absent — Staples, Farrar
- WITNESSES:** None
- BACKGROUND:** The 74th Legislature established the Prison Industry Advisory Committee for the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) to oversee the designation of cost-accounting centers. These centers are the products of a collaborative effort between TYC and the private sector to provide qualifying employment to TYC youth and to serve as a separate accounting entity that tracks the funds used to provide this employment. The 75th Legislature shifted these responsibilities away from the committee. The committee now works to identify private-sector employers and to develop other strategic planning for the transition of TYC youth into society, although no guidelines are set for these responsibilities.
- DIGEST:** HB 1256 would amend the Human Resources Code to define the role of TYC's Prison Industry Advisory Committee by codifying its purpose, composition, and terms of service of committee members.
- The bill would define the purpose and duties of the advisory committee as follows:
- promote the rehabilitation of youth offenders by helping them become successful members of society;
 - enhance their reintegration into society with a reduced chance of committing additional crimes by helping them gain marketable skills, employment experience, and increased confidence; and
 - support TYC's prison industry enhancement program by providing advice on research and development of employment programs.

The bill would specify that the advisory committee must:

- help identify private-sector employers who would be willing to hire TYC youth;
- assist in the development of the prison industries marketing plan;
- provide input on state and federal rule changes and practices affecting the prison industries program and TYC youth; and
- advise TYC on career and technology education programs.

The bill would require the committee to include a cross-section of people, including representatives from organized labor, employers, criminal victim's rights advocates, vocational rehabilitation experts, and other ex-officio members chosen from state government.

The bill also would add the reimbursement of the child's room and board expenses while residing at a TYC facility to the list of priorities for apportioning payment of wages earned by a child working in the prison industries program.

HB 1256 would take effect September 1, 1999. The bill's provisions would not affect the present composition of the board.