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H.B. No. 2136

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to design and use of a model criminal citation and an
addendum to the citation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 2B, Code of Criminal
Procedure, is amended by adding Article 2B.0060 to read as follows:

Art. 2B.0060. MODEL CITATION DESIGN. (a) In this article:

(1) "Citation" means any summons, ticket, or other
official document that a peace officer issues to a person for an
offense punishable by fine only and that requires the person to
respond or appear. The term includes an electronic version of the
summons, ticket, or other official document.

(2) "Law enforcement agency" means an agency of the
state or an agency of a political subdivision of the state
authorized by law to employ peace officers.

(3) "Office" means the Office of Court Administration
of the Texas Judicial System.

(b) Not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year,
each law enforcement agency shall adopt, implement, and, as
necessary, amend the citation and addendum to the citation used by
the agency. The citation and addendum implemented by the agency
must conform to the model citation and addendum designed, adopted,
and disseminated by the office under this article.

(c) The office shall design, adopt, and disseminate to each

law enforcement agency in this state a model citation and addendum to the citation for the purpose of:

(1) reducing costs associated with the failure of a person issued a citation to appear for a scheduled court appearance;

(2) improving the efficiency of courts in this state; and

(3) improving the efficiency of data collection required under other law.

(d) The model citation adopted by the office must:

(1) be based on credible field, academic, or laboratory research; and

(2) be written in clear, plain language and include, as applicable:

(A) important information at the top of the citation, including:

(i) the date, time, and location at which a person issued a citation must appear for court;

(ii) the offense charged and the action the person issued a citation is required to take regarding the charge;

(iii) the consequences of missing a scheduled court appearance; and

(iv) the phone number of the person at the court who is able to provide additional information to or answer questions from the person issued a citation; and

(B) at another location on the citation:

(i) information regarding what the person

1 issued a citation may expect at court, including an assurance that
2 the person will not be arrested for appearing in court for the
3 unresolved misdemeanor for which the citation was issued;

4 (ii) options to resolve the citation other
5 than appearing in court;

6 (iii) the phone number of the person issued
7 the citation; and

8 (iv) any other information, procedure, or
9 best practice that is supported by credible research or commonly
10 accepted as a means to achieve the purposes described by Subsection
11 (c).

12 (e) The model addendum to the citation adopted by the office
13 must include details:

14 (1) regarding any resources that are available to
15 assist a person issued a citation with a court appearance,
16 including resources that provide text reminders, parking details,
17 general directions to the court, transportation options,
18 child-care assistance, and rescheduling instructions; and

19 (2) for persons who are unable to afford fines or costs
20 imposed by a court, for a payment plan, payment deferral, community
21 service, and waiver or reduction of the fines or costs.

22 (f) The office shall consult with the following in designing
23 the model citation and addendum:

24 (1) the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management
25 Institute of Texas located at Sam Houston State University;

26 (2) court clerks;

27 (3) the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement;

1 (4) judges;

2 (5) public defenders;

3 (6) prosecutors;

4 (7) a behavioral science professional with expertise
5 in citation design;

6 (8) the Department of Public Safety of the State of
7 Texas;

8 (9) the Sheriffs' Association of Texas; and

9 (10) the Texas Police Chiefs Association.

10 (g) The office shall provide for a period of user testing
11 led by professionals with expertise in citations and a period of
12 public comment before adopting the model citation and addendum
13 designs.

14 (h) Not later than December 31 of each odd-numbered year,
15 the office shall:

16 (1) review the model citation and addendum adopted
17 under this article;

18 (2) conduct user tests and report on data outcomes and
19 practices for the latest model citation and addendum;

20 (3) if appropriate, modify or update the designs;

21 (4) disseminate the designs to each law enforcement
22 agency in this state; and

23 (5) provide notice to each municipal and justice court
24 in this state of any modification or update to the model citation or
25 addendum adopted by the office.

26 SECTION 2. (a) Not later than December 31, 2026, the Office
27 of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall design,

1 adopt, and disseminate the model citation and addendum to the
2 citation required under Article 2B.0060, Code of Criminal
3 Procedure, as added by this Act. In disseminating the model
4 citation and addendum to the citation, the office shall provide
5 electronic notice to each municipal and justice court in this state
6 of the requirements of Article 2B.0060, Code of Criminal Procedure,
7 as added by this Act, including the date described by Subsection (b)
8 of this section by which law enforcement agencies must adopt a
9 citation and addendum to the citation.

10 (b) Not later than September 1, 2027, each law enforcement
11 agency to which Article 2B.0060, Code of Criminal Procedure, as
12 added by this Act, applies shall adopt a citation and addendum to
13 the citation as required by that article.

14 (c) Notwithstanding Subsection (b) of this section, a law
15 enforcement agency to which Article 2B.0060, Code of Criminal
16 Procedure, as added by this Act, applies is not required to issue
17 citations and addendums to citations that comply with that article
18 until the agency has used the remainder of the citation books the
19 agency possesses.

20 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.