By: Jones of Harris H.B. No. 5525

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to parole guidelines and procedures for inmates convicted of an offense committed when younger than 18 years of age.

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

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the Youth Parole Reform Act.

SECTION 2. Subchapter E, Chapter 508, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 508.1441 to read as follows:

Sec. 508.1441. PAROLE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR INMATE WHO COMMITTED OFFENSE BEFORE AGE OF 18; REPORT. (a) The board, in consultation with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, shall develop and implement:

(1) a version of the parole guidelines adopted under Section 508.144 that:

(A) is specifically designed for an inmate who was younger than 18 years of age at the time the offense for which the inmate is eligible for release on parole was committed; and

(B) prioritizes rehabilitation, educational attainment, mental health treatment, and reintegration support; and

(2) specific procedures to be used during the consideration for release on parole of an inmate described by Subdivision (1)(A).

(b) The procedures developed under Subsection (a)(2) must:

(1) require a parole panel considering the release on parole of an inmate described by Subsection (a)(1)(A) to use the parole guidelines developed under Subsection (a)(1);

(2) prohibit the parole panel from applying the parole guidelines adopted under Section 508.144;

(3) require the parole panel to consider the following:

(A) the inmate's age at the time the offense for which the inmate is eligible for release on parole was committed;

(B) the inmate's demonstrated rehabilitation progress;

(C) the inmate's educational and vocational achievements;

(D) the inmate's psychological and behavioral evaluations; and

(E) input from relevant professionals, family members, and victims, if appropriate; and

(4) include a comprehensive reintegration plan for the inmate.

(c) The board shall annually submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, and members of the legislature a report that includes:

(1) the following information with respect to inmates described by Subsection (a)(1)(A) who are considered for release on parole under the parole guidelines and procedures developed under this section:

(A) the number of inmates considered and the

number released;

(B) the success rate of reintegration of inmates released; and

(C) the recidivism rate of inmates released; and

(2) recommendations for improving the parole guidelines and procedures developed under this section.

(d) The board shall publish the report described by Subsection (c) on the board's Internet website.

SECTION 3. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department shall develop and provide training to members of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and parole commissioners, as defined by Section 508.001, Government Code, on best practices for parole consideration for inmates described by Section 508.1441(a)(1)(A), Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 4. (a) Not later than the 180th day after the effective date of this Act, the Board of Pardons and Paroles shall develop and implement the parole guidelines and procedures required under Section 508.1441, Government Code, as added by this Act.

(b) As soon as practicable after the date the Board of Pardons and Paroles implements the parole guidelines and procedures under Subsection (a) of this section, the board shall reconsider for release on parole any inmate described by Section 508.1441(a)(1)(A), Government Code, as added by this Act, who was previously denied release on parole before the implementation of the parole guidelines and procedures under Subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2025.