

Amend CSSB 1952 by striking ARTICLE 21 and adding a new ARTICLE 21 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 21. JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE ON
POSTCONVICTION EXONERATIONS

SECTION 21.01. (a) The joint interim committee on postconviction exonerations is established to:

(1) study the causes of and investigate wrongful criminal convictions;

(2) identify appropriate improvements in the criminal justice system to prevent future wrongful convictions;

(3) recommend policies, procedures, practices, and legislation needed to prevent future wrongful convictions; and

(4) assess the procedures used by counties to ensure due process and suggest a statewide model for procedures ensuring due process.

(b) The interim committee is composed of the following nine members:

(1) an attorney who represents the state in the prosecution of felonies, as appointed by the attorney general;

(2) two members of the criminal justice committee of the senate who are appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(3) two members of the criminal jurisprudence committee of the house of representatives who are appointed by the speaker of the house;

(4) a member of the judiciary who is appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court;

(5) two law professors who are appointed by the chancellor of The University of Texas System, one of whom works in the forensic science field; and

(6) a criminal defense attorney who is appointed by the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.

(c) The lieutenant governor shall designate one of the members of the criminal justice committee of the senate appointed to the interim committee as described by Subsection (b) to serve as the chair of the interim committee.

(d) The interim committee shall meet initially at the call of the chair of the interim committee, and the interim committee

shall subsequently hold meetings and public hearings at the call of the chair. To the extent that it is financially possible, the interim committee shall hold public hearings in multiple locations across this state.

(e) The interim committee may issue process as provided by the senate and house of representatives rules of procedure and by Section 301.024, Government Code, and has all other powers and duties provided to special committees by the senate and house of representatives rules of procedure, by Subchapter B, Chapter 301, Government Code, and by policies of the committees on administration.

(f) From the contingent expense fund of the senate and the contingent expense fund of the house of representatives equally, the members of the interim committee shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of this Act in accordance with the senate and house of representatives rules of procedure and the policies of the committees on administration. Other necessary expenses of operation shall be paid from the contingent expense fund of the senate and the contingent expense fund of the house of representatives equally.

(g) Not later than October 1, 2004, the interim committee shall prepare and deliver to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives copies of a report containing the interim committee's findings and recommendations.

SECTION 21.02. A person or association required to appoint a member to the joint interim committee on postconviction exonerations shall make the appointment not later than October 1, 2003.