

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1828
By: Wong
Government Reform
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Sex offenders convicted for acts of pedophilia are at risk of recidivism if they have access to potential victims, according to the Council on Sex Offender Treatment. An offender is a recidivist if he repeats his past crime. Considering the traumatic nature of pedophilia, and that the victims are children, every possible measure should be taken to prevent these crimes.

The Government Code provides child safety zones, which are areas where children generally congregate. The section states that sex offenders cannot go near these zones within a distance specified by a parole panel. This restriction reduces offender access to potential victims, thereby reducing the risk of recidivism.

H.B. 1828 amends the Government Code by setting the radius of a child safety zone at 1,000 feet. H.B. 1828 also creates rules for specific exemptions to a child safety zone for a sex offender. It requires for community notification on the part of parole officers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1828 amends the Government code by establishing 1,000 feet as the radius of a child safety zone that a convicted sex offender cannot enter. The bill also prohibits a parole panel from granting a sex offender a blanket exemption from adhering to child safety zones. The panel must specify locations where child safety zone requirements do not apply and must also notify any principal of a school or director of a facility within the safety zone when specific exemptions for offenders take effect. HB. 1828 also requires a parole officer to notify the principal of a school or director of a facility in the child safety zone at least twenty-four hours in advance of the time when the offender will enter the zone and specify when the offender will leave.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005.