

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 775
By: Dutton
Juvenile Justice & Family Issues
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Because of technology, our environment is changing, and as a result, there is a wealth of information that can now be readily accessible through the internet.

The Texas Youth Commission's population trends, new commitments based on county of commitment and residential populations change from year to year and are generally posted on their website, however, they are not posted by the number, racial ethnicity or age of the offender committed per judge. Last year alone, over 44% of all new Texas Youth Commission commitments came from Harris, Bexar and Dallas County.

H.B.775 simply requires that for each quarter, a juvenile court judge must post a report on their county internet website, the total number of youth committed to the Texas Youth Commission by judge, including the youth's year of commitment, age, race and gender.

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

SECTION 1. Amends Section 58.005(b), Family Code by providing this section does not apply to information collected under Section 58.104 or under Subchapter E.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 58 of the Family Code by adding Section 58.351 which applies only to a county with a population of 600,000 or more. Additionally, Section 58.352(a) provides that a juvenile court judge shall post a report on the Internet website of the county in which the court is located. The report must include the total number of children committed by the judge to a correctional facility operated by the Texas Youth Commission and for each child committed to a facility, a general description of the offense committed by the child or the conduct of the child that led to their commitment to the facility including the year the child was committed to the facility and the age range, race, and gender of the child. This information shall be posted no later than the 10th day following the first day of each quarter, a juvenile court judge shall update the information posted on a county Internet website. Finally, a record posted on a county Internet website may not include any information that personally identifies a child.

SECTION 3. Prospective provisions. The change in law made by this Act applies only to a child committed to a correctional facility operated by the Texas Youth Commission on or after January 1, 2008.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007