

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1814
By: Macias
Corrections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There has been an outcry for juvenile justice reform and a desire to make a change in the lives of youth in the Texas Youth Commission (commission). Character education has been shown to reduce staff turnover rate, improve morale, improve working conditions, and lower recidivism.

C.S.H.B. 1814 establishes a character education and training pilot program in two commission facilities and requires the commission to conduct a study on the program's effect.

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

C.S.H.B. 1814 amends the Human Resources Code to require that the Texas Youth Commission (commission) establish a comprehensive character education and training pilot program at either Unit I or Unit II of the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility and another correctional facility operated by or under contract with the commission that the commission chooses to participate in the program.

The bill requires the commission to model the program after the Character First! program or a similar program that emphasizes character education and training.

The bill also requires the commission to conduct a study concerning any cost savings resulting from the implementation of the comprehensive character education and training pilot program at commission facilities at which the program is implemented as compared to other commission facilities, including any cost savings resulting from lower recidivism rates, lower staff turnover rates, and less overall facility damage. C.S.H.B. 1814 requires the commission, not later than January 1, 2011, and January 1, 2013, to prepare and deliver to each member of the legislature a report describing the interim results of the study. The commission shall also deliver a report describing the final results of the study not later than January 1, 2015.

The commission shall establish the comprehensive character education and training pilot program no later than January 1, 2008.

Section 61.0386, as added by this Act, expires February 1, 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The original bill requires the Texas Youth Commission (commission) to establish a comprehensive character education and training pilot program at the West Texas State School and either Unit I or Unit II of the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility. The substitute removes the West Texas State School from the bill and replaces that language with another correctional facility operated by or under contract with the commission that the commission chooses to participate in the program.

C.S.H.B. 1814 80(R)