

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3649
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Corrections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has established a policy limiting the direct mailing of books to inmates primarily to publishers, publication suppliers, or bookstores.

H.B. 3649 requires the department to establish a policy permitting certain volunteer organizations to mail reference books and other education materials directly to inmates.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3649 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to establish a policy that permits an inmate to receive, by mail, reference books and other educational materials from a volunteer organization operating a certain program to promote the general welfare of a TDCJ inmate described by state law, regardless of whether the organization provides those programs to inmates housed in TDCJ facilities. The bill requires TDCJ to adopt rules as necessary to implement the policy for the receipt of books by mail, including rules that define "reference books" and "educational materials." The bill requires TDCJ to establish the policy as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.