

By: Allen

H.B. No. 2869

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of an advisory committee to study issues related to community supervision and corrections departments.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

(1) "Department" means the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

(2) "Division" means the community justice assistance division of the department.

SECTION 2. ADVISORY COMMITTEE; DUTIES. Not later than December 1, 2015, the department shall appoint an advisory committee to:

(1) study:

(A) the funding mechanisms for community supervision and corrections departments established under Chapter 76, Government Code;

(B) the efficacy of current grant funding formulas for purposes of meeting public safety needs; and

(C) the process by which the division makes the determination to allocate grant funding to community supervision and corrections departments;

(2) review problems facing community supervision and corrections departments, specifically pertaining to the adequacy of funding and whether state grant funding allocations fail to

1 maximize available grant funds intended to decrease community
2 supervision revocations; and

3 (3) provide recommendations relating to:

4 (A) streamlining the division's grant
5 application process;

6 (B) increasing the equitable distribution of
7 grant funds, with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of
8 historically underserved communities;

9 (C) developing community supervision strategies
10 that result in decreased community supervision revocations; and

11 (D) decreasing community supervision and
12 corrections department reliance on fees paid by defendants on
13 community supervision to fund basic operations.

14 SECTION 3. APPOINTMENTS; PRESIDING OFFICER. (a) The
15 department shall determine the size and composition of the advisory
16 board. The advisory board must include:

17 (1) representatives of the department;

18 (2) representatives of community supervision and
19 corrections departments established under Chapter 76, Government
20 Code, who represent small, medium, and large jurisdictions with
21 experience in decreasing community supervision revocations;

22 (3) a diverse range of community supervision and
23 corrections department directors with knowledge of existing
24 disparities in funding and grant awards;

25 (4) district or county attorneys;

26 (5) criminal defense attorneys;

27 (6) representatives of criminal justice reform

1 organizations;

2 (7) judges who have demonstrated a deep understanding
3 of evidence-based practices in community supervision and the effect
4 of those practices on community safety and the use of taxpayer
5 funds;

6 (8) individuals with expertise in issues related to
7 substance abuse, mental health, or post-traumatic stress disorder;

8 (9) individuals who have successfully completed
9 community supervision; and

10 (10) any other individuals or representatives of
11 organizations the department determines would be of assistance in
12 addressing the problems facing community supervision and
13 corrections departments.

14 (b) The advisory committee shall elect one of its members as
15 the presiding officer of the committee.

16 SECTION 4. REPORT. (a) Not later than September 1, 2016,
17 the advisory committee shall submit a report containing the
18 recommendations developed under Section 2 of this Act to:

19 (1) the department and the division;

20 (2) the governor;

21 (3) the lieutenant governor;

22 (4) the speaker of the house of representatives; and

23 (5) the standing committees in the senate and house of
24 representatives primarily responsible for criminal justice issues.

25 (b) The department shall make the report submitted under
26 Subsection (a) of this section available to the public and shall
27 publish the report on its Internet website.

1 SECTION 5. COMPENSATION. Members of the advisory committee
2 serve without compensation and are not entitled to reimbursement
3 for expenses.

4 SECTION 6. APPLICATION OF OTHER LAW. Chapter 2110,
5 Government Code, does not apply to the advisory committee.

6 SECTION 7. EXPIRATION DATE. The advisory committee is
7 abolished and this Act expires January 1, 2017.

8 SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect
9 immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members
10 elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas
11 Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for
12 immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.