

1-1 By: White, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Miles) H.B. No. 553  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 8, 2017;  
 1-3 May 19, 2017, read first time and referred to Committee on  
 1-4 Administration; May 22, 2017, reported favorably by the following  
 1-5 vote: Yeas 7, Nays 0; May 22, 2017, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			

1-15 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-16 AN ACT

1-17 relating to the creation of a task force to identify opportunities  
 1-18 for academic credit and industry recognition for inmates of the  
 1-19 Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

1-20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-21 SECTION 1. Chapter 19, Education Code, is amended by adding  
 1-22 Section 19.012 to read as follows:

1-23 Sec. 19.012. TASK FORCE ON ACADEMIC CREDIT AND INDUSTRY  
 1-24 RECOGNITION. (a) The Windham School District, in consultation  
 1-25 with the department, shall establish a task force to review the work  
 1-26 or other productive activities in which persons confined or  
 1-27 imprisoned in the department engage.

1-28 (b) The task force is composed of the following 10 members:

1-29 (1) two representatives of the department designated  
 1-30 by the executive director of the department;

1-31 (2) one representative of the district designated by  
 1-32 the superintendent of the district;

1-33 (3) one representative of the Texas Higher Education  
 1-34 Coordinating Board designated by the commissioner of higher  
 1-35 education;

1-36 (4) one representative of the Texas Workforce  
 1-37 Commission designated by the executive director of the commission;

1-38 (5) one representative of a private vendor operating a  
 1-39 correctional facility under a contract with the department,  
 1-40 appointed by the governor;

1-41 (6) three representatives of public junior colleges,  
 1-42 as defined by Section 61.003, appointed by the governor, including:

1-43 (A) at least one representative of a public  
 1-44 junior college that provides education services to persons confined  
 1-45 or imprisoned in the department; and

1-46 (B) at least one representative of a public  
 1-47 junior college that does not provide services described by  
 1-48 Paragraph (A); and

1-49 (7) one representative of a faith-based organization,  
 1-50 appointed by the governor.

1-51 (c) The governor shall designate a member of the task force  
 1-52 to serve as presiding officer.

1-53 (d) A vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same  
 1-54 manner as the initial appointment.

1-55 (e) A member of the task force may not receive compensation  
 1-56 for service on the task force, but is entitled to reimbursement for  
 1-57 actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force  
 1-58 duties.

1-59 (f) The task force may accept gifts and grants from any  
 1-60 source to be used to carry out a function of the task force.

1-61 (g) The task force shall meet at least quarterly at the call

2-1 of the presiding officer and at other times as determined by the  
2-2 presiding officer.

2-3 (h) The task force shall:

2-4 (1) conduct an ongoing comprehensive review of the  
2-5 work or other productive activities in which persons confined or  
2-6 imprisoned in the department engage; and

2-7 (2) identify opportunities for the award of high  
2-8 school credit, college credit, or joint high school and college  
2-9 credit, or the award of an industry-recognized credential or  
2-10 certificate, for engaging in that work or activity.

2-11 (i) The district, in consultation with the department, the  
2-12 Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating  
2-13 Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission, shall for any type of  
2-14 work or productive activity for which an opportunity is identified  
2-15 under Subsection (h), determine the actions necessary for obtaining  
2-16 the award of the applicable academic credit or industry  
2-17 recognition.

2-18 (j) Not less than once every four years, the task force  
2-19 shall submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker  
2-20 of the house of representatives, and the standing committees of the  
2-21 legislature having jurisdiction over the department a report that  
2-22 summarizes the review conducted under Subsection (h) and the  
2-23 district's actions with regard to obtaining the award of academic  
2-24 credit or industry recognition under Subsection (i). The district  
2-25 shall provide the task force with any information necessary to  
2-26 complete the report.

2-27 (k) Chapter 2110, Government Code, does not apply to the  
2-28 task force established under this section.

2-29 (l) The task force shall submit the first report required  
2-30 under Subsection (j) not later than December 31, 2020. This  
2-31 subsection expires February 1, 2021.

2-32 SECTION 2. Not later than December 1, 2017, the executive  
2-33 director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the  
2-34 superintendent of the Windham School District, the commissioner of  
2-35 higher education, the executive director of the Texas Workforce  
2-36 Commission, and the governor shall appoint members to the task  
2-37 force established by Section 19.012, Education Code, as added by  
2-38 this Act, in the manner required by Subsection (b) of that section.

2-39 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

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