

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

10:00 AM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.016

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice was held on Wednesday, September 12, 2018, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.016, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator John Whitmire, Chair
Senator Joan Huffman, Vice Chair
Senator Brian Birdwell
Senator Konni Burton
Senator Brandon Creighton
Senator Sylvia Garcia
Senator José Menéndez
Senator Charles Perry

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Bryan Hughes

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The Chair laid out and Senator West made opening remarks on the following interim charge:

Vb. Monitoring

*Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Criminal Justice Committee during the 85th Legislature and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation of the following: **Senate Bill 30**, Relating to the inclusion of instruction regarding interaction with peace officers in the required curriculum for certain public school students and in driver education courses and to civilian interaction training for peace officers.*

The Chair laid out the following interim charge:

I. Identify Successful Re-Entry Programs

Study current reentry programs and procedures across Texas' adult criminal justice system and identify which are most effective. Review best practices and make recommendations to ensure that incarcerated individuals who are released from a county or city jail, state jail, or the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have adequate supervision and access to employment, housing, treatment, and other support programs to allow for successful reentry and integration into the community and to prevent recidivism.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out and made remarks on the following interim charge:

II. State Jail Review to Improve Outcomes

Perform a comprehensive analysis and study of the Texas state jail system. Examine the access to and use of rehabilitation, vocation, and education programs. Determine whether current programs are effective and if there are efficiencies that can be found to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out and made remarks on the following interim charge:

III. Telemedicine in Correctional Facilities

Review current availability and best practices in the state regarding the use of telemedicine for inmates in city or county jail, state jail, or the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Examine and make recommendations on whether access to care and outcomes can be improved through the expanded use of telemedicine for medical and mental health services, and whether expansion would create efficiencies. Examine barriers to implementation and expansion of telemedicine in correctional facilities.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out and made remarks on the following interim charge:

IV. Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention

Study opportunities to increase awareness of human trafficking through public awareness campaigns, among local officials, and within public school districts including the identification of potential human trafficking and stash houses as well as how and where to report. Examine the Human Trafficking Prevention Business Partnership Program at the Office of the Secretary of State and provide recommendations for increasing participation of Texas businesses in the fight against human trafficking.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out and made remarks on the following interim charge:

Va. Monitoring

Senate Bill 12, Relating to the creation of a grant program to assist law enforcement agencies with the purchase of bulletproof vests and body armor.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair then called invited testimony on the following interim charge:

Vb. Monitoring

Senate Bill 30, Relating to the inclusion of instruction regarding interaction with peace officers in the required curriculum for certain public school students and in driver education courses and to civilian interaction training for peace officers.

The Chair laid out and made remarks on the following interim charge:

Vb. Monitoring

Senate Bill 1326, Relating to procedures regarding criminal defendants who are or may be persons with a mental illness or an intellectual disability and to certain duties of the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System related to persons with mental illness.

The Chair then called invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair then opened public testimony on Charges II, I, III, IV, and Va., Vb., and Vc, respectfully (see attached witness lists).

The Chair moved that the public testimony be closed; without objection, it was so ordered.

There being no further business, at 4:32 PM Senator Whitmire moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the Chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator John Whitmire, Chair

Amanda Salazar, Clerk