87R16464 JRR-D

By:  González of El Paso H.B. No. 1308

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a task force to conduct a comprehensive study on best practice standards for the confinement of pregnant prisoners in county jails.

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

SECTION 1.  (a) A task force is established to conduct a comprehensive study on best practice standards for the confinement of pregnant prisoners in county jails. The study must identify and make recommendations regarding the following with respect to the confinement of pregnant prisoners:

(1)  current policies and procedures;

(2)  barriers to accommodations and justice;

(3)  best practices used in other states;

(4)  policies that would improve jail standards; and

(5)  any other issue the task force considers appropriate.

(b)  The Commission on Jail Standards shall appoint the members of the task force. The task force must include at least:

(1)  one representative of the Commission on Jail Standards;

(2)  one representative of a statewide organization that advocates for incarcerated women;

(3)  one representative of a statewide organization that represents corrections professionals;

(4)  one representative of a county jail;

(5)  one member who is a mental health professional;

(6)  one member who is an obstetrician or gynecologist;

(7)  one member who is a doula providing culturally responsive care;

(8)  one member who was pregnant while incarcerated; and

(9)  one member who is a certified reentry peer support specialist.

(c)  The member appointed under Subsection (b)(1) of this section serves as the presiding officer of the task force.

(d)  The task force shall prepare a written report that includes:

(1)  a description of the activities of the task force;

(2)  the findings and recommendations of the task force;

(3)  a plan for how the best practice standards identified by the task force can be implemented statewide;

(4)  any proposals for legislation; and

(5)  any other matter the task force considers appropriate.

(e)  Not later than December 1, 2022, the task force shall submit the report prepared under this section to:

(1)  the governor;

(2)  the lieutenant governor;

(3)  the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(4)  the presiding officers of the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over issues relating to criminal justice.

(f)  The Commission on Jail Standards shall make the report available to the public on the commission's Internet website.

(g)  The task force is abolished and this Act expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.