87R8811 AJZ-D

By:  Ramos H.B. No. 2233

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring certain law enforcement agencies to implement a policy regarding cite and release for certain criminal offenses.

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

SECTION 1.  Chapter 14, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended by adding Article 14.07 to read as follows:

Art. 14.07.  CITE AND RELEASE POLICY. (a)  In this article:

(1)  "Institutes" means the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas located at Sam Houston State University and the Caruth Police Institute located at the University of North Texas at Dallas.

(2)  "Law enforcement agency" means an agency of the state, or of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state, that employs peace officers who make motor vehicle stops or arrests in the routine performance of the officers' official duties.

(b)  The institutes, in consultation with large, medium, and small law enforcement agencies, including agencies that have implemented written policies to issue citations under Article 14.06(b) or (c), the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System, the Commission on Jail Standards, appropriate organizations engaged in the development of law enforcement policy, and nonprofit or community-based organizations with expertise in issues related to criminal or juvenile justice, shall jointly develop, adopt, and disseminate to law enforcement agencies a model policy and associated training materials regarding the issuance of citations in lieu of arrest for misdemeanors as permitted by Article 14.06(b) or (c). The institutes shall provide a reasonable period for public comment regarding the model policy and associated training materials before adopting the policy and materials.

(c)  The model policy developed under Subsection (b) must be based on:

(1)  credible academic and policy research on the issuance of citations in lieu of arrest; and

(2)  best practices used by law enforcement agencies in this state and other states that have successfully:

(A)  implemented a cite and release policy; and

(B)  reduced arrests for misdemeanors for which a peace officer has statutory authority to issue a citation in lieu of arrest.

(d)  The model policy developed under Subsection (b) must include the following information:

(1)  procedures for issuing a citation for misdemeanors punishable by a fine only as described by Article 14.06(b) and for issuing a citation for Class A and B misdemeanors as described by Article 14.06(c);

(2)  a list of any exceptional circumstances under which an arrest is necessary for a misdemeanor otherwise eligible for the issuance of a citation in lieu of arrest;

(3)  a plan to monitor the implementation of the policy and compliance with the policy, including collection of necessary data;

(4)  procedures for providing to a defendant, at the time the citation is issued, information that will maximize the likelihood of the defendant's appearance in court; and

(5)  any other procedures or best practices supported by credible research or commonly accepted by law enforcement agencies for reducing arrests for misdemeanors for which a peace officer has statutory authority to issue a citation in lieu of arrest.

(e)  The model policy developed under Subsection (b) must be designed to achieve the following goals:

(1)  reducing the number of people arrested and booked into county and municipal jails for misdemeanors and avoiding the unnecessary detention of people who are arrested for but not yet convicted of a misdemeanor;

(2)  maximizing law enforcement efficiency by increasing the issuance of citations in lieu of arrest; and

(3)  maximizing defendants' appearance rates in court pursuant to a citation.

(f)  Each law enforcement agency shall adopt, implement, and as necessary amend a detailed written policy regarding the issuance of citations in lieu of arrest for misdemeanors as permitted by Article 14.06(b) or (c). The policy must meet the requirements applicable to the model policy as described by Subsections (c), (d), and (e). A law enforcement agency may adopt the model policy adopted by the institutes under Subsection (b).

(g)  Not later than December 31 of each odd-numbered year, the institutes shall review the model policy and associated training materials adopted under this article and jointly modify the policy and materials as appropriate.

(h)  Not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, each law enforcement agency shall review its policy adopted under this article and modify the policy as appropriate.

SECTION 2.  (a)  Not later than December 31, 2021, the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas and the Caruth Police Institute shall jointly develop, adopt, and disseminate the model policy and associated training materials required under Article 14.07(b), Code of Criminal Procedure, as added by this Act.

(b)  Not later than May 1, 2022, each law enforcement agency as defined by Article 14.07(a)(2), Code of Criminal Procedure, as added by this Act, shall adopt a policy as required by Article 14.07(f), Code of Criminal Procedure, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.