

By: Crockett

H.B. No. 2565

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the release on parole of certain inmates during a public health emergency.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter E, Chapter 508, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 508.1455 to read as follows:

Sec. 508.1455. RELEASE ON PAROLE OF CERTAIN INMATES DURING PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY. (a) In this section, "public health emergency" means an immediate threat from a communicable disease as defined by Section 81.003, Health and Safety Code, that:

(1) poses a high risk of death or serious long-term disability to a large number of people in the general population; and

(2) creates a substantial risk of public exposure because of the disease's high level of contagion or the method by which the disease is transmitted.

(b) Notwithstanding any other law and regardless of whether an inmate has completed any classes or programs that the board has previously ordered the inmate to complete before being released on parole, a parole panel shall consider for release and release on parole an inmate who is eligible for release on parole if the inmate is confined in a facility that is directly affected by a public health emergency and:

(1) at least 25 percent of the inmates confined in the

1 facility are infected or suspected of being infected with the
2 communicable disease related to the public health emergency; or

3 (2) the inmate has a high risk of developing serious
4 symptoms or complications from the disease as determined by
5 guidelines established by the federal Centers for Disease Control
6 and Prevention.

7 (c) This section expires September 1, 2024.

8 SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies to any
9 inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under contract
10 with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice on or after the
11 effective date of this Act, regardless of whether the offense for
12 which the inmate is confined occurred before, on, or after the
13 effective date of this Act.

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