

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 2331

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

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Hearing Date: March 24, 2021 8:00 AM

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Becky Morris

Self

San Angelo, TX

Please support this bill. This past 12 months have been devastating for those incarcerated with the Covid 19 pandemic and the winter storm. Change is crucial in TDCJ in the event of disasters.

Amite Dominick, Dr.

Texas Prison Air Conditioning Advocates

Rockport, TX

I would like to register our support for HB2331. TPAA is an advocacy organization the focuses on inhumane conditions within the Texas prisons. During the recent disasters we had a multitude of family members and incarcerated individuals reach out to us desperately for help, support, and information. Some of these reports include: lack of food, sanitation problems, poor food, lack of water (for days), poor medical care, lack of medical, denial of medical care, extreme temperatures and death. We need a HB2331 to have humane procedures in place in disaster situations.

Mark Anthony Vasquez, Mr.

Statewide Leadership Council

Weslaco, TX

I wish to tender my own approval - as a citizen and a member of the Statewide Leadership Council with the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition - of bill 2331 this 87th Legislative session. I support all legislation that encourages private growth and personal development for all people. I feel legislation such as 2331 provides for this I speak of and I feel we as Texans should support bills such as 2331 - a bill with so much promise. Thank you.

Mark Anthony Vasquez, Mr.

Statewide Leadership Council

Weslaco, TX

I want to show my support of bill 2331 because I think this type of legislation provides an opportunity for thousands to improve what are compromised responses during times of crisis. Failing to act on this will continue to jeopardize the lives of thousands and an opportunity to act now through legislation will provide for the proper cultivation of appropriately metered responses to meet during moments of critical demand. Thank you.

Karen Page

Myself

San Angelo, TX

As a concerned citizen of the Great State of Texas I ask you to please support HB 2331 by Rep. Cortez. This bill will require an

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advisory panel to create emergency procedures for TDCJ & the Board of Pardons and Paroles to follow next time an emergency happens. Not only am I representing myself I'm representing the thousands of incarcerated individuals that were innocently subjected to unnecessary illness and even death due to the inefficiency of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice & the Board of Pardons and Paroles when COVID 19 was introduced into the prisons by outside persons. Visitation had already been cancelled and the ONLY way these individuals were exposed to COVID-19 was by staff of TDCJ. Many people have already died. Some died that had been granted parole and were awaiting a class or release date. This cannot happen again.

Miranda Grant

Self

Dallas, TX

I ask that you support House Bill 2331. It could realize substantial cost savings in parole funding and change the process to make sense. It seeks to move efforts and funds to the front end in the parole process and would create goal based incentives for the incarcerated as well as reduce recidivism.

Diana Briseno, BSW, LCDC

Statewide Leadership Council

Houston, TX

My name is Diana Briseno. I am in support of HB 2331. My loved one and many other men and women went without drinking water, had no facilities to use or shower, and were not able to flush toilets for several days during the freeze in Texas the week 2/15/2021. Please pass HB 2331 so that if a freeze or other natural disasters occur, Texas units will function and keep everyone safe physically and mentally. We on the outside felt the impact, but the men and women who are incarcerated felt the impact multiplied many times over. As human beings, we must be able to put ourselves in others' shoes. We are all human beings. Please pass HB 2331.

Carl Hunter, Senior Policy Advisor

Recovery Coalition of Texas (RCT)

Austin, TX

Covid-19 showed us that emergency planning is essential to saving lives. The lives of incarcerated men and women deserve that same kind of treatment. However, lack of preparedness, and just being caught off guard saw the unnecessary loss of life. The same held true in our recent snowstorm that again caught us off guard and unprepared. I support this bill because it address the need for preparedness in times of disaster in an effort to save lives.

Laurie Pherigo

C2H - Community Services Coordinator

Dripping Springs, TX

I am a lifelong Texan who has lived experience in the judicial system. I was incarcerated from August 14, 2007 to August 5, 2013. Look, the bottom line is this is desperately needed by TDCJ inmates, for their safety and security, for the families who worry for them so desperately, and for the state which should be able to hold our heads up in the knowledge that we do not practice policies of vengeance in our criminal justice system, but we always act with the word JUSTICE in mind.

Lesley Pherigo

self

Dripping Springs, TX

Please vote in favor of HB 2331

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Janis Henderson, Dr.

J. Henderson Education Services

Lubbock, TX

I write to express my support of this bill. As a family member (parent) of an inmate, I follow closely matters related to the well being of inmates in the Texas prison system. The provisions of this bill would provide common sense approach by inclusion of those with lived experience within/with the system as well as professionals with the background to make decisions that maintain a safe and humane environment for inmates as well as staff of TDCJ.

Thank you for your consideration.