

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 567
By: Bowers
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to a report by the American Bar Association's Business Law Section, individuals have been denied the right to attend or graduate from school, certain employment opportunities, and housing based on choosing to wear their natural hairstyles. Individuals should not be required to put chemicals in their hair to change its texture or appearance or otherwise divest themselves of their cultural identity in order to adapt or be seen as deserving of opportunities in schools or the workplace or for housing. H.B. 567 seeks to enact the CROWN Act, which provides protection against discrimination based on race-based hairstyles.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 567 amends the Education Code to prohibit a public school district or public institution of higher education from adopting a student dress or grooming policy, including a policy for an extracurricular activity, that discriminates against a hair texture or protective hairstyle commonly or historically associated with race.

H.B. 567 amends the Labor Code to establish that a provision of applicable state law governing employment discrimination that refers to discrimination because of race or on the basis of race includes discrimination because of or on the basis of an employee's hair texture or protective hairstyle commonly or historically associated with race. The bill establishes that an employer, labor union, or employment agency commits an unlawful employment practice if they adopt or enforce a dress or grooming policy that discriminates against such a hair texture or protective hairstyle. These provisions apply only to an unlawful employment practice that occurs on or after the bill's effective date.

H.B. 567 amends the Property Code to establish that a provision of the Texas Fair Housing Act, other than provisions establishing criminal penalties, that refers to discrimination because of race or on the basis of race includes discrimination because of or on the basis of a person's hair texture or protective hairstyle commonly or historically associated with race. This applies only to a discriminatory housing practice that occurs on or after the bill's effective date.

H.B. 567 specifies that the term "protective hairstyle" includes braids, locks, and twists.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.