

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1427
By: Campos
Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

As technology continues to evolve, there is a need to update the law in order to address how offensive and harmful harassment conduct is committed through the use of technology. Currently, the offense of harassment does not include making obscene, intimidating, or threatening telephone calls or other electronic communications from temporary or disposable telephone numbers. This allows for such conduct to continue without criminal punishment and for the continued victimization of both minor and adult Texans. H.B. 1427 seeks to address this issue by expanding the conduct that constitutes harassment to include such behavior.

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. 1427 amends the Penal Code to expand the conduct that constitutes harassment to include making obscene, intimidating, or threatening telephone calls or other electronic communications from a temporary or disposable telephone number provided by an Internet application or other technological means with intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another person.

H.B. 1427 applies only to an offense committed on or after the bill's effective date. The bill provides for the continuation of the law in effect before the bill's effective date for purposes of an offense, or any element thereof, that occurred before that date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.