

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1708
By: Canales
Corrections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, local and county jails are required to maintain a facility climate of not less than 65 degrees Fahrenheit and not more than 85 degrees Fahrenheit. However, state prison and jail facilities are not held to that same standard. Many areas of Texas experience summer weather that regularly exceeds 100 degrees Fahrenheit, which poses a major health hazard and has resulted in illness and death for both inmates and employees alike. H.B. 1708 seeks to ensure the health and safety of all individuals who work or are held at state criminal justice facilities by ensuring that the temperature in each Texas Department of Criminal Justice facility is maintained at not less than 65 degrees Fahrenheit and not more than 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

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. 1708 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to ensure that the temperature in each facility operated by TDCJ is maintained at not less than 65 degrees Fahrenheit or more than 85 degrees Fahrenheit. TDCJ is not required to comply with this requirement until September 1, 2024.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.