

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4283
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There are concerns about the effectiveness of veterans treatment courts in reducing recidivism rates among veterans who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Veterans treatment courts have been established in many jurisdictions across the country to provide an alternative to traditional court proceedings for veterans who have been charged with certain types of offenses. However, there is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of these courts in reducing recidivism rates among participants. H.B. 4283 seeks to address the issue of high recidivism rates among veterans who have been involved in the criminal justice system by requiring a study to be conducted to evaluate the recidivism rate of defendants who have completed a veterans treatment court program. The study will provide information on the effectiveness of such courts in reducing recidivism rates among participants and will make recommendations for further actions to improve outcomes for defendants in the program and program goals to reduce the recidivism rate of defendants.

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. 4283 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Judicial Council (TJC), in collaboration with the Texas Veterans Commission, to conduct a study to evaluate the recidivism rate of defendants who successfully completed a veterans treatment court program in the preceding 10 years. The report must include the following information:

- the recidivism rate, calculated by determining from available information the percentage of defendants who have, since completing the program:
 - been arrested for an offense alleged to have been committed after the defendant completed the program;
 - been convicted of an offense committed after the defendant completed the program;
 - had a term of community supervision revoked due to a technical violation or commission of another offense committed after the defendant completed the program; and
 - had a term of parole or mandatory supervision revoked due to a technical violation or commission of another offense committed after the defendant completed the program;

- any apparent patterns in the recidivism rate for defendants based on the available information;
- a summary of any information the council determines is correlated with or otherwise relevant to the recidivism rate for defendants; and
- recommendations for further action to improve outcomes for defendants in the program and program goals to reduce the recidivism rate.

The bill authorizes the TJC to collaborate with any state or federal agency, county, or court as necessary to obtain the required information. The bill requires the TJC, not later than January 1, 2025, to prepare and submit to the governor and the legislature a written report containing the results of the study and any recommendations for legislative or other action. The bill's provisions expire September 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.