

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2101
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Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In the 1980s, The Rights of Crime Victims Act was passed by the Texas Legislature to enshrine the rights of victims into state law. These rights included, but were not limited to, the "right to information" regarding a victim's case and court proceedings. Due to the era in which this important piece of policy was adopted, it did not account for modern forms of electronic communication like emails, text, or other methods of personal contact. Currently, police departments and other agencies that communicate with victims of crime typically only do so by mail. S.B. 2101 seeks to modernize the forms of notification regarding the rights of crime victims by including an option for information pertaining to those rights to be delivered electronically to victims, guardians of victims, or close relatives of a deceased victim.

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

S.B. 2101 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to require a judge, state's attorney, peace officer, or law enforcement agency required to notify, inform, or disclose information to a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a deceased victim in accordance with rights granted to crime victims to provide such notification or information in the following manner:

- electronically, including by text message, videoconference, or email;
- by mail;
- through an anonymous, online portal; or
- by contacting by telephone or otherwise making personal contact with the victim, guardian, or relative, as applicable.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.