

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 2158  
By: King  
Corrections  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Individuals reentering the community after being incarcerated can lack the knowledge, skills, and training needed to secure stable employment, thus increasing the risk that they will reenter confinement. According to a study by the Rand Institute, inmates who participate in any kind of educational program behind bars—from remedial math to vocational auto shop to college-level courses—are up to 43 percent less likely to reoffend and return to prison. They also appear to be far more likely to find a job after their release, and the social stability that comes with it. S.B. 2158 seeks to provide inmates greater access to educational opportunity by establishing a pilot program through which one or more nonprofit entities will operate an adult education program to enable eligible inmates to successfully complete a high school program that can lead to a diploma.

### **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. 2158 amends the Education Code to require the Windham School District, not later than September 1, 2024, to establish and implement a pilot program under which one or more nonprofit entities provide an adult education program to enable certain inmates to successfully complete a high school program that can lead to a diploma. The bill makes eligible to enroll in such an adult education program a person confined or imprisoned in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice who is at least 26 years of age and not more than 50 years of age and who meets the following criteria:

- has failed to complete the curriculum requirements for high school graduation;
- has failed to perform satisfactorily on a test required for high school graduation; or
- has failed to earn a high school equivalency certificate.

S.B. 2158 requires the district to do the following with regard to the pilot program:

- enter into a memorandum of understanding with at least one nonprofit entity to provide an adult education program under the pilot program;
- require that each such nonprofit entity identify each region of Texas in which the entity is able to operate such a program; and
- identify, in consultation with each nonprofit entity with which the district enters into a memorandum of understanding, at least three schools operated by the district that are suitable to serve as sites for the pilot program.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

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