88R1679 MEW-F

By:  Meyer H.B. No. 2143

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the punishment for possession of child pornography; increasing criminal penalties.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 43.26, Penal Code, is amended by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1) to read as follows:

(d)  An offense under Subsection (a) is:

(1)  a felony of the third degree if the person possesses visual material that contains fewer than 100 visual depictions of a child as described by Subsection (a)(1);

(2)  [~~, except that the offense is:~~

[~~(1)~~] a felony of the second degree if [~~it is shown on the trial of the offense that~~] the person possesses visual material that contains 100 or more visual depictions of a child as described by Subsection (a)(1) but fewer than 500 such depictions [~~has been previously convicted one time of an offense under that subsection~~];

(3)  [~~and~~

[~~(2)~~] a felony of the first degree if [~~it is shown on the trial of the offense that~~] the person possesses visual material that contains 500 or more visual depictions of a child as described by Subsection (a)(1); or

(4)  a felony of the first degree punishable by imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for life or for any term of not more than 99 years or less than 25 years if it is shown on the trial of the offense that, at the time of the offense, the person was:

(A)  an employee at a child-care facility or a residential child-care facility, as those terms are defined by Section 42.002, Human Resources Code;

(B)  an employee at a residential treatment facility established under Section 221.056, Human Resources Code;

(C)  an employee at a shelter or facility that serves youth and that receives state funds; or

(D)  receiving state funds for the care of a child depicted by the visual material [~~has been previously convicted two or more times of an offense under that subsection~~].

(d-1)  If it is shown on the trial of an offense under Subsection (a) that the visual material depicted a child younger than 10 years of age at the time the image of the child was made or that the defendant has been previously convicted of an offense under that subsection:

(1)  an offense described for purposes of punishment by Subsection (d)(1) or (2) is increased to the next higher category of offense; or

(2)  the minimum term of confinement for an offense described for purposes of punishment by Subsection (d)(3) is increased to 15 years.

SECTION 2.  The change in law made by this Act applies only to an offense committed on or after the effective date of this Act. An offense committed before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this section, an offense was committed before the effective date of this Act if any element of the offense occurred before that date.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.