H.B. No. 2620

AN ACT

relating to the confinement in a county jail of a person pending a transfer to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and to compensation to a county for certain costs of confinement.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 499.071, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 499.071.  SCHEDULED ADMISSIONS POLICY. The board shall adopt and enforce a scheduled admissions policy that requires [~~permits~~] the department [~~institutional division~~] to:

(1)  review documents received under Section 8(a) or (c), Article 42.09, Code of Criminal Procedure, and certify the documents or notify the county that the documents require corrective action within the time period required by Section 8(b) of that article; and

(2)  accept persons [~~inmates~~] within the time period [~~45 days of processing as~~] required by Section 499.1215(b) [~~499.121(c)~~].

SECTION 2.  Subchapter F, Chapter 499, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 499.1215 to read as follows:

Sec. 499.1215.  TRANSFER TO DEPARTMENT; COMPENSATION TO COUNTIES. (a) In this section, "cost of confinement" means the amount that would have been incurred by the department to confine a person. The term does not include costs for medical, behavioral, or pharmaceutical care.

(b)  The department shall take custody of a person awaiting transfer to the department following conviction of a felony and sentencing to death or to a term of imprisonment in the department or confinement in a state jail not later than the 45th day following the date on which all documents required by Sections 8(a) and (c), Article 42.09, Code of Criminal Procedure, have been certified as required by Section 8(b) of that article.

(c)  If the department does not take custody of a person within the period prescribed by Subsection (b), the department shall compensate the county for the cost of confinement for each day the person remains confined in the county jail following the expiration of that period.

(d)  If a person remains confined in the county jail following the expiration of the period prescribed by Subsection (b) due to a delay caused by the county:

(1)  the county is not entitled to compensation under Subsection (c) for any day that the person remains confined due to the delay caused by the county; and

(2)  the county and the department shall arrange to transfer the person to the department as soon as practicable after the delay.

SECTION 3.  Section 8, Article 42.09, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(b)  The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall not take a defendant into custody under this article until the designated officer receives the documents required by Subsections (a) and (c) of this section and determines that the documents do not contain any errors or deficiencies requiring corrective action by the county. Not later than the fifth business day after the date of receipt of [~~The designated officer shall certify under the seal of the department~~] the documents, the designated officer shall:

(1)  certify the documents under the seal of the department if the designated officer determines the documents do not require any corrective action; or

(2)  notify the county that the designated officer has determined that the documents require corrective action [~~received under Subsections (a) and (c) of this section~~].

(b-1)  A document certified under Subsection (b) [~~this subsection~~] is self-authenticated for the purposes of Rules 901 and 902, Texas Rules of Evidence.

SECTION 4.  Section 499.121(c), Government Code, is repealed.

SECTION 5.  Not later than September 30, 2023, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice shall adopt the scheduled admissions policy required by Section 499.071, Government Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 6.  Section 499.1215, Government Code, as added by this Act, applies only to compensation to a county for the costs described by that section related to the confinement of a person that occurs on or after October 1, 2023, regardless of whether the requirements under that section for transfer of the person to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice are completed before, on, or after that date.

SECTION 7.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

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    President of the Senate Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2620 was passed by the House on April 21, 2023, by the following vote:  Yeas 139, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2620 on May 25, 2023, by the following vote:  Yeas 143, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2620 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 21, 2023, by the following vote:  Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

                 Date

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               Governor