

By: West

S.B. No. 1147

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to vocational training for and the occupational licensing of inmates in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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

SECTION 1. Section 501.027, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 501.027. ACCESS TO PROGRAMS BY FEMALE INMATES. (a) The department shall develop and implement policies that increase and promote a female inmate's access to programs offered to inmates in the custody of the department, including educational, ~~[vocational]~~ substance use treatment, rehabilitation, life skills training, and prerelease programs and vocational programs providing education and training designed to ensure successful employment following the inmate's release. The department may not reduce or limit a male inmate's access to a program to meet the requirements of this section.

(b) Not later than December 31 of each year, the department shall:

(1) prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, each standing committee of the legislature having primary jurisdiction over the department, and the reentry task force described by Section 501.098 a written report that includes:

(A) a description of any department policies that

1 were created, modified, or eliminated during the preceding year to
2 meet the requirements of this section; ~~and~~

3 (B) a list of:

4 (i) all programs available to female
5 inmates in the custody of the department during the preceding year;
6 and

7 (ii) vocational programs made available to
8 female inmates in the custody of the department during the
9 preceding year; and

10 (C) a description of any issue identified by the
11 department that prevents the department from making more vocational
12 programs available to female inmates in the custody of the
13 department; and

14 (2) publish the report on the department's Internet
15 website.

16 SECTION 2. Section 53.021, Occupations Code, is amended by
17 adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

18 (b-1) Subsection (b) does not prohibit a licensing
19 authority from accepting an application from an inmate imprisoned
20 in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

21 SECTION 3. As soon as practicable after the effective date
22 of this Act, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall develop
23 and implement the policies necessary to implement Section 501.027,
24 Government Code, as amended by this Act.

25 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.