

By: King

S.B. No. 2158

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of an adult education pilot program for certain inmates of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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

SECTION 1. Section 12.255, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1) Notwithstanding Subsection (c) or any other law and in addition to the number of charters allowed under this section and Subchapter D, the commissioner, on the basis of submitted proposals, shall grant a charter to a nonprofit entity described by Section 12.256 to provide an adult education program to inmates under the pilot program established under Section 493.035, Government Code.

SECTION 2. Chapter 493, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 493.035 to read as follows:

Sec. 493.035. ADULT EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) The department shall establish a pilot program under which one or more nonprofit entities provide an adult education program under Subchapter G, Chapter 12, Education Code, to enable inmates described by Subsection (b) to successfully complete:

(1) a high school program that can lead to a diploma;
and

(2) career and technology education courses that can lead to industry certification.

1 (b) An inmate who is at least 26 years of age and not more
2 than 50 years of age is eligible to enroll in an adult education
3 program operated under the pilot program if:

4 (1) the inmate:

5 (A) has failed to complete the curriculum
6 requirements for high school graduation; or

7 (B) has failed to perform satisfactorily on an
8 assessment instrument required for high school graduation; and

9 (2) the department approves the inmate's enrollment in
10 the program after:

11 (A) assessing the inmate's suitability for
12 participation in the program using the results of the risk and needs
13 assessment instrument adopted under Section 501.0921; and

14 (B) evaluating the inmate's conduct while in the
15 custody of the department.

16 (c) In admitting inmates to an adult education program
17 operated under the pilot program, the nonprofit entity shall give
18 priority to an inmate who has not earned a high school equivalency
19 certificate.

20 (d) The department shall issue a request for proposals from
21 nonprofit entities described by Section 12.256, Education Code, to
22 provide an adult education program under the pilot program. The
23 department shall require that each applicant identify in the
24 applicant's proposal each region of this state in which the
25 applicant is able to operate an adult education program under the
26 pilot program.

27 (e) The department shall contract with at least one

1 qualified applicant to operate an adult education program under the
2 pilot program.

3 (f) The department, in consultation with each nonprofit
4 entity that the department contracts with under this section, shall
5 identify at least three and not more than five facilities operated
6 by the department that are suitable to serve as sites for the pilot
7 program.

8 SECTION 3. Not later than September 1, 2024, the Texas
9 Department of Criminal Justice shall establish and implement the
10 pilot program required by Section 493.035, Government Code, as
11 added by this Act.

12 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.