

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4937
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Corrections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) currently has limited discretion regarding the date on which the BPP is required to reconsider for release an inmate who has previously been denied release. While crime victims are allowed to provide input, the BPP is required to reconsider for release many inmates as soon as practicable after the first anniversary of the date of denial. C.S.H.B. 4937 seeks to provide the BPP with more discretion regarding the scheduling of subsequent parole reviews for certain inmates currently subject to a one-year review by revising the date on which an inmate who has previously been denied release must be reconsidered for release.

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

C.S.H.B. 4937 amends the Government Code to revise the date on which an inmate who has previously been denied release must be reconsidered for release by the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) under provisions relating to the consideration and order of an inmate's release on parole, as follows:

- removes the condition that the BPP reconsider for release as soon as practicable after the first anniversary of the date of denial of an inmate other than an inmate serving a sentence that is ineligible for mandatory supervision or for second degree or third degree felony injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual; and
- subjects all inmates instead to the condition that the BPP reconsider an inmate for release during a month that is designated for reconsideration by the parole panel that denied release and after the first anniversary of the date of the denial and before the fifth anniversary of that date, while retaining the exception provided by current law for inmates serving a sentence for aggravated sexual assault or a life sentence for a capital felony.

C.S.H.B. 4937 applies to any inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under contract with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) on or after the bill's effective date, regardless of whether the offense for which the inmate is confined occurred before, on, or after the bill's effective date. The bill requires the BPP, as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date, to adopt a policy consistent with provisions relating to the consideration and order of an inmate's release on parole, as amended by the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 4937 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes a provision absent from the introduced establishing that the bill's provisions apply to any inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under contract with TDCJ on or after the bill's effective date, regardless of whether the offense for which the inmate is confined occurred before, on, or after the bill's effective date.