

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1506
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Criminal Justice
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas law currently requires the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) to reconsider parole-eligible offenders every year in many cases, even when there is little to no likelihood of release. This system places an unnecessary and painful burden on victims and their families, who must repeatedly relive their trauma by traveling—sometimes long distances—to testify against an offender's release. It forces them to endure the emotional toll of preparing for and attending hearings year after year, with no certainty of when the process will end.

Furthermore, the current one-year review cycle is also unfair to incarcerated individuals. Many offenders face annual parole reviews with no realistic chance of release, creating false hope and an endless cycle of disappointment. When BPP has no intention of granting parole in the near future, requiring inmates to undergo the process each year wastes resources and prevents them from having a clear and reasonable understanding of their path forward.

S.B. 1506 addresses these issues by giving BPP the ability to extend most hearings out up to five years, rather than the currently required one-year extension.

The committee substitute adds a section that makes it clear that this bill applies to current and future inmates incarcerated in Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This was the original intention of the bill, and this language makes that intention clear.

S.B. 1506 amends current law relating to the frequency with which the Board of Pardons and Paroles reconsiders inmates for release on parole.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 508.141(g) and (g-1), Government Code, as follows:

(g) Requires that the policy establishing the date on which the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) may reconsider for release an inmate who has previously been denied release require BPP to reconsider the inmate for release during a month designated under Subsection (g-1) by the parole panel that denied release.

Deletes existing text requiring that the policy require BPP to reconsider for release an inmate serving a sentence for certain offenses during a month designated under Subsection (g-1) by the parole panel that denied release and an inmate other than an inmate described by Subdivision (1) (relating to requiring that the policy require BPP to reconsider the inmate for release an inmate serving a sentence for certain offenses during a month designated under Subsection (g-1) by the parole panel that denied release) as soon as practicable after the first anniversary of the date of the denial. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(g-1) Requires that the month designated for reconsideration, rather than under Subsection (g)(1) by the parole panel that denied release:

(1) except as provided by Subdivisions (2) and (3), begin after the first anniversary of the date of the denial and end before the fifth anniversary of the date of the denial;

(2) if the inmate is serving a sentence for an offense under Section 481.115 (Offense: Possession of Substance in Penalty Group 1 or 1-B), Health and Safety Code, involving a controlled substance listed in Penalty Group 1, or an offense under certain provisions of that code, begin as soon as practicable after the first anniversary of the date of the denial; or

(3) if, rather than unless, the inmate is serving a sentence for an offense under Section 22.021 (Aggravated Sexual Assault), Penal Code, or a life sentence for a capital felony, rather than in which event the designated month is required to, begin after the first anniversary of the date of the denial and end before the 10th anniversary of the date of the denial.

Makes nonsubstantive changes to this subsection.

SECTION 2. (a) Provides that Section 508.141 (Authority to Consider and Order Release on Parole), Government Code, as amended by this Act, applies to any inmate who is confined in a facility operated by or under contract with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice regardless of when the offense for which the inmate is confined occurred.

(b) Requires BPP to adopt a policy consistent with Section 508.141, Government Code, as amended by this Act, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.