

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1833
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Criminal Justice
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The misuse of social media platforms has become a growing concern in the facilitation of illegal activities, including the distribution of controlled substances. Criminal enterprises increasingly leverage social media's accessibility, anonymity, and broad reach to market and deliver dangerous drugs to vulnerable populations, including minors. This evolving threat poses significant challenges to law enforcement and amplifies the risks associated with illegal drug use.

S.B. 1833 seeks to address this issue by enhancing penalties for individuals who use social media platforms in furtherance of controlled substance offenses. By increasing the punishment to the next higher category of offense and imposing additional penalties for first-degree felonies, this legislation aims to deter the use of digital tools for drug trafficking and strengthen the state's ability to combat this modern criminal tactic. The bill underscores Texas's commitment to protecting its communities by adapting existing laws to address emerging methods of criminal activity.

As proposed, S.B. 1833 amends current law relating to the use of a social media platform in furtherance of an offense involving the delivery of a controlled substance and increases criminal penalties.

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 Subchapter D, Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 481.142, as follows:

Sec. 481.142. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM FOR DELIVERY OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE. (a) Defines "social media platform."

(b) Provides that if it is shown on the trial of an offense under certain sections of the Health and Safety Code, involving the delivery of a controlled substance that the defendant used a social media platform in furtherance of the offense, the punishment for the offense is increased to the punishment prescribed by the next higher category of offense, except that the punishment for a felony of the first degree is increased by five years and the maximum fine for the offense is doubled.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.