

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1860
By: Hughes
Trade, Workforce & Economic Development
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The 88th Texas Legislature enacted the Securing Children Online through Parental Empowerment (SCOPE) Act, which aims to protect minors from harmful, deceptive, or unfair trade practices in connection with the use of certain digital services and electronic devices by, among other provisions, giving parents greater control over their child's online activity and preventing obscene material from being easily accessible to minors. As a means of achieving this end, the act also set out requirements regarding the adoption of standards for permissible electronic devices and software applications used by a public school district or open-enrollment charter school and requirements for districts and charter schools before transferring data processing equipment or an electronic device to a student. S.B. 1860 seeks to clarify that private schools are excluded from the application of the act.

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

S.B. 1860 amends the Business & Commerce Code, as added by Chapter 795 (H.B. 18), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, to exempt a private school that offers a course of instruction for students in one or more grades from prekindergarten through grade 12 and that is not operated by a governmental entity from the applicability of state law governing the use of digital services by minors.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.