

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1879  
By: Schwertner  
Local Government  
6/10/2025  
Enrolled

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Walker County is proposing to build a new justice center on land owned by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). The land is near the existing Huntsville Police Department and Walker County Jail and utilized for livestock grazing and hay production. Walker County's courthouse is currently located in downtown Huntsville and causes traffic and congestion when court is in session. Additionally, the county incurs costs transporting defendants from the county jail for court appearances. S.B. 1879 seeks to facilitate the transfer of land adjacent to the existing Huntsville Police Headquarters and County Jail from TDCJ to Walker County for the purpose of building a new justice center.

S.B. 1879 amends current law relating to the transfer of certain state property from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to Walker County.

### **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. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), as soon as practicable, to transfer to Walker County (county) the real property interests of the State of Texas and TDCJ in the tract of land described by Subsection (f) of this section.

(b) Provides that the county is authorized to use the property transferred under this Act only for a justice center. Provides that, if the county uses the property for any purpose other than the purpose described by this subsection or if the county fails to use the property for the purpose described by this subsection before the 10th anniversary of the date of transfer, ownership of the property automatically reverts to TDCJ.

(c) Requires TDCJ to transfer the property by an appropriate instrument of transfer. Requires that the instrument of transfer:

(1) provide that:

(A) the county is authorized to use the property only for a justice center; and

(B) ownership of the property will automatically revert to TDCJ if the county uses the property for any purpose other than the purpose described by Paragraph (A) of this subdivision or fails to use the property for the purpose described by Paragraph (A) of this subdivision before the 10th anniversary of the date of the transfer; and

(2) describe the property to be transferred by metes and bounds.

(d) Requires TDCJ to retain custody of the instrument of transfer after the instrument of transfer is filed in the real property records of the county.

(e) Provides that Sections 31.158 (Real Estate Transactions Authorized by Legislature) and 31.159 (First Option to Purchase), Natural Resources Code, do not apply to the transfer of real property authorized by this Act.

(f) Sets forth the boundaries of the tract of land referred to in this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.