

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2776
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Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill sponsor has informed the committee that there are almost 1,000 children in Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) facilities across the state. According to TJJD reports, the youth committed in these facilities have been increasingly high-risk and high-need while TJJD's contract care has severely declined due to an inability for most providers to work with high-risk youth. This coupled with staffing shortages could leave youth in a disadvantaged position to receive needed services. The bill sponsor has also informed the committee that one program that supports these youths is the credible messengers program, which brings individuals previously incarcerated by TJJD back into facilities to share their stories and give advice to the currently incarcerated, allowing youth in these facilities to learn from others with similar backgrounds and receive encouragement and guidance on how to build a life outside of the facility. However, under current law, TJJD is not authorized to share information regarding a credible messenger due to public information laws. S.B. 2776 seeks to address this issue by authorizing the disclosure of information concerning a person who was committed to and discharged from TJJD, is at least 18 years of age, and has given consent for the disclosure.

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. 2776 amends the Human Resources Code to authorize the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) to disclose information concerning a person who was committed to TJJD, including personally identifiable information, if the following conditions are met:

- the person has been discharged from commitment by TJJD, is at least 18 years of age, and has given consent for TJJD to disclose the information; and
- TJJD does not disclose any information for which the person did not consent to disclosure and does not disclose any information for a purpose other than the purpose for which the person consented to disclosure.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.