

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Corrections
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COMMENTS FOR HB 3006 by Canales

Rhonda Baker
Self/ CSM
Fort Worth, TX

My son is incarcerated in TDCJ and has seen many die from the heat but then they heard that they died from something else, lies perpetuated by the staff . Our heat is debilitating to all and no one should be left in a cell without air conditioning. It's inhumane for our pets and this type of treatment should be against the law for any one despite the crimes they've committed. I understand the cost of electricity is expensive, but some of those imprisoned are ill and the heat exacerbates their health conditions. Please change the treatment of those incarcerated.

Beatriz Solis
Self
Glendale, TX

My love one is all ready in a TDCJ unit I can said what he said on summer is very hard just with vents the air comes hot they use only water to be fresher but is not works cuz the water comes hot too so please pass this law for they be a little better we need have humanity for they

Elisabeth Moreno
self/retired
Austin, TX

I urge the Texas legislature to pass Rep. Canales HB3006 to ensure humane conditions in Texas prisons. Subjecting inmates as well as prison staff to triple digit temperatures during the long and brutal summers we experience in this state is the very definition of cruel and unusual punishment. It is also a stain on the state's reputation. Not only have fatalities been recorded as a result of the state's inhumane practices but surely prison discipline, rehabilitation and work programs have suffered as well.

Patricia Reyes
Inmates
San Antonio, TX

It doesn't matter what crime placed an inmate in prison. By all counts they are still human. They already have to endure being away from their loved ones, not being to provide for their families, not being there for their families but to add having to live in temperatures that are inhumane is pure evil.

Michele Deitch, Prof.
Self --Professor/Attorney
Austin, TX

Although I submit this testimony in my personal capacity, I currently serve as Director of the Prison & Jail Innovation Lab at UT Austin. I previously served as General Counsel to the Texas Senate Criminal Justice Committee, & I have often been requested to provide expert guidance to this body on a variety of criminal justice issues.

Air conditioning is critical because the extreme temperatures place incarcerated people and staff at extreme risk of death, heat stroke, and other ailments. Extreme heat also increases tension among the population and can lead to violence. It also makes it difficult for incarcerated people to focus on rehabilitative programs and educational services, which can compromise their preparation for re-entry.

The heat issue is also extremely important to staff, since it contributes to a work environment that is unhealthy, unsafe, and unpleasant. That makes it harder for the agency to recruit and retain staff, which is especially problematic when the agency is facing such dire understaffing.

Texas law requires all JAILS to be maintained between 65-85 degrees in occupied areas; that same standard should be applied to Texas prisons. It has worked effectively to protect incarcerated people's health and safety, made for better working conditions for staff, and helped protect jail agencies from litigation.

More than 35 years ago, I served as a federal court-appointed monitor of the Texas prison system in the Ruiz litigation, so I am familiar with the challenges of court oversight. Earlier this year, the federal district court in *Tiede v. Collier* made a preliminary ruling that the extreme heat conditions in Texas prisons are unconstitutional. The judge left an opening for the Legislature to fix these conditions as quickly as possible, before the case proceeds to trial. But the opinion left no doubt what the ultimate outcome of that trial will be, if the case moves forward: Texas WILL be found liable for its failure to protect incarcerated people from the extreme heat. The risk for Texas is that the court will exercise long-term oversight of the prison agency until those conditions are resolved. The court will likely order the agency to air condition the entire prison system much faster than the HB 3006 schedule.

Federal court oversight is expensive, intrusive, and disruptive for an agency & it ties the hands of the Legislature, but it is the only solution when state officials fail to meet their obligation to provide safe conditions inside the prisons that they fund and operate. After numerous previous efforts to pass similar legislation have failed, the Legislature now is being given this one final opportunity to exercise its authority and demonstrate its willingness to meet its constitutional obligation, without need for court oversight. It is essential that TDCJ install air conditioning in all prison units throughout the state at the earliest possible time. HB 3006 offers a reasonable schedule for accomplishing that goal.

Mark Anthony Vasquez
Texas Prison Community Advocates
Weslaco, TX

My name is Mark Anthony Vasquez and I reside in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas. Above all, we are asked to address an issue which impales so many. This is an issue which is discussed every legislative year and it is time this is resolved. Every year there are people in custody who suffocate and who are forced to endure extreme heat in TDCJ facilities. I submit my support of HB 3006 because the bill is created to mandate by law the recognition of our humanity as a people and will include temperature control for thousands housed in TDCJ facilities. We urge our state representatives to vote in favor of HB 3006 because it addresses an issue which causes so much distress to thousands of families with loved ones in TDCJ custody. It is this we saw firsthand when it was my own brother, John Manuel, when he was detained in a TDCJ facility and it is this the witness accounts we now see when speaking with those who have loved ones in custody. We hear stories of having to flood toilets to get relief, of having to endure long hours without proper temperature adjustment and having to feel the weight of their breathing change due to the heat. We hear of people having to navigate symptoms of suffocation and heat exhaustion in order to make it through the summer months. Experts have shared data on the effects of these extreme conditions on the human body and have demonstrated the need for a living, breathing organism to eliminate exposure to extreme temperatures in order to survive. This is common knowledge, apparently, among TDCJ personnel, as we are aware that the livestock held for service in TDCJ facilities are given accommodations to heat and extreme temperatures. We ask if this service and consideration should be extended to those housed in custody who are human in nature and who are not livestock. We need to make a change to Texas policy concerning our currently incarcerated people and we must do something to stop the unnecessary deaths due to heat exposure in our Texas facilities. It is this why I submit my public comment concerning the extreme heat in TDCJ. HB 3006 will address this need for temperature control and will stifle the deaths and suffering of thousands of individuals who find themselves housed in a TDCJ facility. We need a law in place that will make temperature control mandatory and that will allocate the necessary resources needed in order to make heat-induced deaths in our TDCJ facilities a relic of our past. I, as we all should, support HB 3006.

Marci Marie Simmons, Director of Community Engagement
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance
Weatherford, TX

I strongly support HB 3006 because no one—incarcerated or not—should be forced to live in inhumane, life-threatening conditions. Texas prisons without adequate climate control expose people to extreme heat and cold, violating basic human rights and putting lives at risk.

This bill is a critical first step toward accountability and dignity in our prison system. Installing climate control in TDCJ facilities isn't just about comfort—it's about safety, health, and humane treatment. I urge legislators to pass HB 3006 and protect the lives of those who are too often forgotten.

Sade Wright, COO
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance
Dallas, TX

HB 3006 is about basic human rights. Installing climate control systems in Texas Department of Criminal Justice facilities isn't a luxury—it's a life-saving measure.

As the Chief Operating Officer of The Wright Cause Urban Youth Conservation (TWCUYC) and a member of the Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance, I work closely with people who have experienced incarceration in Texas. Many of our members have shared traumatic stories of surviving extreme heat while in custody—fainting from dehydration, suffering heat strokes, and being denied medical care. The conditions they describe are inhumane and dangerous, especially for individuals with chronic health conditions.

Excessive heat in prisons is a public health crisis. It's also a moral failure. Denying people access to safe temperatures during Texas summers is cruel and avoidable. We cannot continue to look away from the suffering this causes—physically and mentally.

This bill represents a necessary step toward ensuring dignity and safety for incarcerated individuals. No one should be sentenced to heat-related illness, trauma, or death. HB 3006 acknowledges that people in state custody are still human—and deserve to be treated as such.

I fully support this legislation and urge lawmakers to pass it without delay.

Tonya Obella, President & Founder
Voices For Texas Prisoners
Bryan, TX

Please Pass This Bill For The Safety Of Staff & Inmates In These Facilities. How Many More Life's Have To Be Lost? 1 Was One Too Many

Carrie Shack
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance
Texas City, TX

The extreme heat is not going away in Texas, if anything it just gets increasingly worse as time goes on. A judge and/or jury sentenced these humans to a period of incarceration where they surrender their rights, privileges, and freedom but in Texas it might also mean a death sentence. The temperature conditions in the majority of the prisons are extremely dangerous and causing irreparable damage. The human cells begin breaking down when temperatures reach the mid-high 80's with no relief. If by chance they do survive the heat, many have lifelong issues from years of overheating weakening their organs. TDCJ needs all units climate controlled immediately to stop this cruel and unusual punishment.

Krisa Sonntag
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance
Fort Worth, TX

People who are being corrected cannot meet the goals required of them to return to society if they are living in extreme temperatures. A first-world nation should be able to boast a first-world reformatory.

LaVernon King, Organizer
Lioness impacted justice women's organization
Manor, TX

The safety and concern is very much important for the individual to have, In these environments it gets extremely hot and causes heat strokes and other things. Having the proper climate in would erase alot of heat strokes and less strenuous

Don Aldaco, Victim of 24 in Solitary Confinement in TDCJ
Texas Prison Community Advocates..Texas Prison Reform
Corpus Christi, TX

I served 26 years in TDCJ, 14 yrs of those on older facilities that had no type of air ventilation or air/heat. Saying that it was torture during the summer is an understatement. I was traumatized having to deal with the extreme tempatures, it would get so hot without any reprieve that I was forced to dosed myself with water throughout the day, I was forced to stay in my cell, alone wearing nothing bc if I did put cloths on, it would just make it worst. During the winter, ut was a whole type of torture with heat and being forced to shower in cold water bc the unit correctional officers would claim that there was no hot water. Let me add that the air conditioner and heater is not just for comfort but a necessity in prison where tempatures get extreme and capable of causing bodily, mentally hard and even death.

Rebecca Putz, Ms
Family
Bryan, TX

Ac is a health factor without it people are dying in the prison i drive trucks for a living and if ac goes down even with windows opens its 20 degrees hotter I can imagine how bad it is in the prison

Wolf Sittler, mr
self
Austin, Texas, TX

Climate control inside all TDCJ facilities has been proposed for years. The main argument against it has been the financial cost. There is another cost. That would be to the families of those who have died and will die, both inmates and staff. Passing this bill should not be difficult. It is a simple matter of following the Golden Rule. It is time to let the moral argument trump the financial one and move forward as quickly as possible to ensure humane physical conditions for all those who live and work in state facilities. To postpone remedial action is to be complicit in the consequences.

Michael Gallier
Self
Houston, TX

Strong Support for HB 3006 – Ensuring Humane and Safe Conditions in TDCJ Facilities

I support HB 3006, which mandates the installation of climate control systems in Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) facilities. This bill is an important step toward safeguarding the health, dignity, and safety of both incarcerated individuals and also the correctional staff.

As a native and lifelong Texan and resident I know that the summers here are brutal with temperatures often soaring above 100°F. Many TDCJ facilities lack adequate air conditioning, exposing inmates and staff to extreme heat that can lead to heat-related illnesses and, tragically, fatalities. During the summers I think of those I know who are or were in TDCJ facilities and subject to this extreme heat (and the past extreme cold snaps we have had over the past winters) To me this seems like cruel and unusual punishment. HB 3006 begins to address this issue by requiring the TDCJ to install climate control systems in key areas such as housing units, medical facilities, kitchens, and visitation areas, maintaining reasonable indoor temperatures that are necessary to protect human life and dignity.

It looks to me that funding provisions of HB 3006 demonstrates fiscal responsibility while prioritizing human welfare.

Supporting HB 3006 is not just a matter of policy; it's a moral imperative. Providing humane living conditions aligns with our values and upholds the dignity of all individuals within our correctional system.

I urge legislators to pass HB 3006 and affirm Texas's commitment to humane and responsible governance.

Diana Linares, Student-
lioness justice impacted women's alliance
Austin, TX

I am a member of Lioness justice impacted women's alliance and I wholeheartedly support this bill.

Amanda Smith
Self
Austin, TX

It is inhumane to subject human lives to unsafe temperatures. Access to heating and cooling is critical to ensure the health, both physical and mental, of our incarcerated neighbors. These are human lives who deserve decency as they carry out terms. Please do the decent thing.

Christy wagers
Self
Cleveland, TX

They ar people too. It is inhumane to have units with no a/c during the summer months . How would you like it? These are our loved ones suffering

Joanna Klein
Self
Odessa, TX

My son has been incarcerated for four years now. All we ask is for everyone regardless of their reasons for being incarcerated to be treated humanely. The heat is like ovens cooking our loved ones. If you are lucky to get a drink of cold water a day. Now even the water is bad at my sons unit, he got sick as well as others. So now ice or cold water. And when they come for inspection and ask the inmates do you get water all day, relief if you need it and so on, they have to say yes because the Warden is standing there looking at you. Please, do something to help everyone incarcerated. Its all a lie that they take care of the inmates. Thank you.

Brittany Hearon
Self
Houston, TX

It is inhumane to not provide air conditioning with our Texas heat. Let's get these climate control systems going. If we as people establish cooling centers in our cities because people die from the heat. How do we say no to putting climate control in prisons? Making people suffer is criminal in my mind.

Kathy Moreno
Self
Anna, TX

This is a necessity!

Gayle Whipple
Beto Unit
San Angelo, TX

It is not fair that prisoners do not have any heat and cooling. I understand it's not being totally comfortable but people have died in the hot Texas temperatures. Staff and prisoners are passing out. Something has to be done

Keishunn Reed
Inmates Offenders Convicts & Prisoners Advocate
Houston, TX

Argument for Inhumane Conditions in TDCJ Regarding Heat vs. Air Conditioning for Animal Shelters

9 CFR § 3.2 Indoor housing facilities.

(a) Heating, cooling, and temperature. Indoor housing facilities for dogs and cats must be sufficiently heated and cooled when necessary to protect the dogs and cats from temperature or humidity extremes and to provide for their health and well-being. When dogs or cats are present, the ambient temperature in the facility must not fall below 50 °F (10 °C) for dogs and cats not acclimated to lower temperatures, for those breeds that cannot tolerate lower temperatures without stress or discomfort (such as short-haired breeds), and for sick, aged, young, or infirm dogs and cats, except as approved by the attending veterinarian. Dry bedding, solid resting boards, or other methods of conserving body heat must be provided when temperatures are below 50 °F (10 °C). The ambient temperature must not fall below 45 °F (7.2 °C) for more than 4 consecutive hours when dogs or cats are present, and must not rise above 85 °F (29.5 °C) for more than 4 consecutive hours when dogs or cats are present. The preceding requirements are in addition to, not in place of, all other requirements pertaining to climatic conditions in parts 2 and 3 of this chapter.

The stark contrast between the lack of adequate climate control for incarcerated individuals within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) facilities and the legal and ethical requirements for providing air conditioning to animals in various settings presents a compelling argument regarding inhumane conditions. This disparity highlights a disturbing devaluation of human life and well-being compared to the standards afforded to animals under Texas law and general ethical considerations.

Sarah Shaughnessy
Self
Zephyr, TX

People are dying due to no Air . I just did 20 years flat and witness several people die from it being too hot in the cells with no ac. That is not right. They are already posing for there crime they shouldn't have to pay it with there life.

Randle Oneal, Sgt
Self
Zephyr, TX

They are not in a torture chamber. Trust what they treat them like. They are humans not animals.

Michelle Storie
461-65-4717
Marshall, TX

The employees and wards of TDCJ deserve to be able to stay alive. Extreme heat over 100 degrees for long periods of time is a rampant problem in Texas in the summer. When you put that into what amounts to a concrete box, that gets much higher. These are people. They are literally cooking in the Summer. The inmates have had to pour water, when they have it, on the ground and lay in it to cool off. Could you even imagine doing that? Or what it feels like when your brain gets that hot? These people need help. Please help. If you can't muster sympathy for the inmates, remember there are Correctional Officers that have to work in full garb every day in these places. Long shifts and they wear more than the inmates do. Please help them. Pass this. 85 to stay alive is a very needed thing in our correctional system.

Carol Mayorga
Self/ registered nurse
Lubbock, TX

Denying inmates access to air conditioning in the sweltering Texas heat is inhumane. Temperatures inside prisons can reach lethal levels, putting lives at risk. Let's be clear: these individuals were not sentenced to death. No one—no matter their crime—should be subjected to cruel and dangerous conditions. This is a human rights issue, and silence makes us complicit

Lisa Anderson-Harrell
Self
Spring, TX

My son is a justice involved person. He has been released on parole recently. He endured 6 six long years of grueling heat in TDC, for almost half of each year. As his mother, I worried daily about his health as I saw the temperature rise throughout the summer. It impacts the incarcerated individuals as well as loved ones. In order to be able to relate, in the middle of August, turn off your AC for a full 24 hours and see how you fare. You will see it's torture, not a luxury.

Paula Graves
Taxpayer
Granbury, TX

They treat them worse then a dog in a cage an if air conditioner was installed then u wouldn't be short in employees

Alicia Jordan
Friends in tdcj
Port lavaca, TX

I know it's prison and tdcj but I'm pretty sure there is enough money somewhere that can be used to put air conditioning in the units. I know there are alot of them and I know prison is prison but not having air conditioning can make the inmates sick to where they can have heat strokes and worse and it takes an act of congress for anything to get done in tdcj. I have friends in different units and they all complain about something whether it be about the air conditioning or how short handec they are and it takes forever to get things done. So consider this if you and someone in there yourself would you be ok with this?

Donna Elizondo
self
San Antonio, TX

I think they should install air conditioner cause those unit get hot n some people have medical issues .

Jill Hornok
Self & loved one
Addison, TX

I'm trusting this Bill can pass to help all of our loved ones that are being overheated without air conditioning. What would you do if you had a loved one that was taken from you & they were suffering in inhumane conditions and many near by dying in this Texas heat? Please put yourself in their shoes in the summertime

Marciadean Harrison, Mrs
Self
Burleson, TX

HB3006 Air Conditioning of Texas State Jails: My grandson is in the Kenedy Unit in South Texas where the temperatures are extremely hot during the summer months. He has been suffering there for over 10 years. He has a very hard time sleeping with the heat and humidity. His only recourse it to wet down the concrete floor and lay directly on the floor. This is inhumane and not healthy. We know inmates are being punished for their crimes but this is not fair to subject a human being to these conditions. It is time you step up and provide the funds to solve these conditions. What if this was your son or grandson????

Molly Molen
Self
Fort Worth, TX

I am in favor of humane conditions for inmates including air conditioning! Meals as well. Human grade food for inmates.

Glenna Hayes
Self and caregiver
La Porte, TX

They need a/c Texas heat is way to hot

Laura Garcia
Medicaid Care Manager/Self
Corpus Christi, TX

Letting people suffer or die in prisons because of dangerous temperatures disregards our basic humanity. The mission of TDCJ is to protect the public, employees, and the inmates in custody.

Brenda Sontag
self
New Braunfels, TX

I am writing to bring urgent attention to the unbearable and inhumane heat conditions inside Texas Prisons. As temperatures soar each year, incarcerated individuals are left to suffer in facilities without air conditioning in overcrowded dorms and cells with poor ventilation.. This is not just uncomfortable-it is torture.

The heat does not only punish those incarcerated; it punishes their families as well. We live with constant fear of our loved ones' health and lives, knowing that heatstroke, dehydration, and death are very real possibilities. Yet we have no recourse, no clear path to demand action, and no meaningful response from those in power. Most of us fear retaliation to our loved one if we dare call in about the heat or anything else.

This is not about comfort. It is about basic human rights, dignity and the fundamental duty to protect life. No sentence should include the possibility of death by heat. Texas must act now to install climate control in all prisons before more lives are lost.

Sincerely,
Brenda Sontag
New Braunfels, Texas 78130

Jason Wysong
Self
Spring, TX

People in prison are still humans created in Gods image like anyone else outside. They deserve Humane temperature Conditions.

Courtney Walker-Stevens
Self
AUBREY, TX

My husband is currently incarcerated at the Byrd unit. The last time he was in tdcj, he suffered what I would consider a heat stroke or heat related issue. I worry about him this round and his apparent sensitivity to this Texas heat. Mentally, all inmates would benefit from air conditioning.

Penny Morgan
My loved one
Killeen, TX

My
Loved one is in Coffield where our loved ones are literally cooking sometimes sadly to death. My dogs live better than my loved one. It is inhumane the temperatures our loved ones must endure. Please do something to alleviate these horrific conditions. Thank you for reading my submission and plea.

Susan B Vian, Self retired
Self Retired
Porter, TX

Please consider installing Air Conditioning in all TDCJ PRISON UNITS AND CELL.

Maria Hernandez Galindo, Ms
Self
Fort Worth, TX

It is of high importance that the TDCJ install Air conditioner in the Texas prisons due that the heating conditions is bad when it reaches the three digits inside those cells. It is inhumane how the inmates have to go thru this high temperatures for several months with no air conditioning, it's also a health hazard. It's sad when i heard that an inmate die from this hot weather and no where to go. I pray that the TDCJ do something about this issue. Some of them end up in there for making a mistake at their young age and hopefully it will help them make their sentences in a better environment that will help them emotionally and physically since their lives at risk of having a heat stroke specially the older inmates and those who have health issues. In overall it is inhumane treatment to all of them not having air conditioning in this kind of weather. I plead to please have mercy on them and give them an opportunity to focus on better themselves. I believe it will be less fights, less inmates will mental illness and less violence. I am on support for this bill. Thank you and may God bless you all.

Marie Pousson
self
Houston, TX

To those on the House Corrections committee: I support HB3006 and the installation of HVAC in TDCJ. I visited a prison for a closing ceremony for the Kairos ministry of a fellow church member in the month of October a few years back. While it was an inspirational ceremony, even in October it was very hot in the common area, even with fans blowing the air. I felt like I could have used a hand fan that day, but wondered what it might be like in July and August. I could imagine the cells for inmates and tried to put myself in their shoes as Texas heat is no joke. That is the case after our own homes lack power after a hurricane. At least the power eventually comes back on and the AC works once again. But the inmates and guards alike are impacted by lack of climate controlled systems. Heat related illness and even deaths have occurred. Please advocate for HVAC to be included in inmate cells of all types in TDCJ. I care about the humans who are there, both workers and those who are behind bars and cannot leave. They cannot advocate for themselves, but I can. We have a surplus in the state and some of it could be used in the budget for TDCJ to add humane treatment of inmates by adding AC.

Thanks,
Marie in 77018

Sandra Hendric
self
Weatherford, TX

I currently have a loved one incarcerated in the state of Texas which reaches temperatures in the 100's as early as April and up to 110 with fell like up to 115. No human being should have to go without air conditioning. Too many are DYING from heat stroke. This is a violation of their civil rights and INHUMANE. No one under the eyes of God should suffer like this. We the taxpayers are paying more than enough for the state to ENSURE ALL PRISONS HAVE AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING.

Eric Kunish, Advocacy Co-chair
NAMI Central Texas
Austin, TX

I support this bill.

Vicki Schmidt
Self - ministry assistant
Allen, TX

I urge you to vote in favor of this bill

Kristi Bartlett
self - clerk school district
Odessa, TX

The Texas prison system is a disgrace for the state of Texas. Even animals get climate controlled facilities. Yes, it is prison and isn't supposed to be fun. However, the temperature climbs to 105 and more. The facility will go into lockdown and prisoners do not get access to cool water. They drink from their sink. The fans blow down the hall, but the air is stopped by their locked cell doors. Not every prisoner has the money for a personal fan. They lay on the concrete floor to try to get some kind of relief. This is sub human torture. Texas should be a leader in rehabilitation and instead it is one of the worst prison systems in the country. When will Texas arise up and be a leader?

Willie Bonds
TPCA Self
San Antonio, TX

Please approve this AC bill. I have family in TDCJ til 2040 and beyond. Please.

Stephanie Goad
Self Executive Director
Bastrop, TX

I have my 2 sons in prison. They say is so hot they lay naked on the floor and pour water on themselves too cool off. They say the water in the bins get immediately hot when poured in their cups. The fans do nothing as that just circulates the hot air within the facility. This is causing multiple deaths within the elderly population in prison. Sadly my Son has stated sometimes he would rather be dead .Thank you

Claire Anderson
Self
Austin, TX

Dear Honorable Committee Members, I urge you to please purchase and install air conditioning immediately to all TDCJ facilities. It has recently been proven by trial that not having climate control to maintain a minimum of 85 degrees in the summer as in humane. This is putting inmates and correctional officers at risk on a daily basis. Please do not allow one more summer and countless more deaths occur from this cruel and unusual practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration with the life saving measures.

Sincerely,
Claire Anderson

Sherry Grimes
self
Allen, TX

Please support air conditioning in all Texas prisons. My nephew is in one of these facilities. Temperatures inside can reach over 110 degrees without taking into account humidity. This is inhumane in this day and age. An article in The Dallas Morning News (March 30) states that a federal judge has ruled it unconstitutional not to have air conditioning. People are dying. People are suffering heat exhaustion and other health issues. Excessive heat can cause organs to start shutting down. The unrelenting heat gives rise to anger and frustration, which often lead to violence. Both on the part of the inmates and the officers.

The pig barn is air conditioned. The chicken coops are air conditioned. Are Texans less important than animals? As for cooling methods, my nephew says the drinking water is often hot, dirty, and bug-infested. Ice is not readily or easily available. Extra showers are not easily available.

An editorial in The Dallas Morning New (May 20, 2022) urged lawmakers to provide air conditioning to at least 85 degrees. It also states "About a third of responders (inmates) said they did not have access to ice. Surveyors wrote about difficulties accessing clean water. ... As for fans, ..., they often just circulate hot air and can make a person hotter at the most dangerous time. ... The Texas Department of Criminal Justice claims it will take over \$1billion to install air conditionin in all its units. ... It said it would take \$20 million for one prison. In reality, the amount was \$4 million, a figure that became clear after the state spent \$7 million dollars fighting the lawsuit.
... How long can we justify allowing tens of thousands of people to be housed in unsafe conditions?"

Annie Dennis
self
Gorman, TX

Dear Chair Harless and Members of the House Corrections Committee,

I am writing to urge your support for pending legislation that mandates air conditioning in Texas prisons. The brutal heat endured by all those incarcerated and correctional staff is inhumane-it contributes to worsening medical conditions, costly litigation and avoidable deaths.

This is a bipartisan issue of public health, work safety, and moral responsibility. Cooling prison units would reduce liability, improve moral, and bring TDCJ into alignment with basic decency standards.

Please consider moving forward AC legislation like HB 489, HB 1315, HB 2997, HB 3006, HB 3443, and ensure they receive a full committee hearing. The lives of thousands depend on your leadership.

Sincerely,
Ann Dennis
Gorman 76454

Joan Nelson
Self
Cleveland, TX

With temperatures so high it's hard for any humans to live without air conditioning. It's hard to breathe in the units with concrete walls and having hot air with the fans going, it's devastating..

Annette Gomez
Self/loved one
Cibolo, TX

My husband lives at the Ramsey one unit in Roshan TX and he suffers in the heat all anytime the temperature is above 70. This location needs AC unit he is restrictive housing building.

Ginny Fredricks
Self. Retired
Austin, TX

I have always thought cruel and unusual punishment was not allowed..how can no air conditioning in 90 and 100 degree heat be anything else. Please provide air conditioning to all those who are incarcerated.

John Hardie
self
Corpus Christi, TX

I've been a clergyman for over 35 years. Through Kairos Ministries and pastoral visits, I have visited the McConnell Unit in Beeville several times. I also correspond with someone in the Allred Unit In Iowa Park. I've seen firsthand how bad the heat is in the summer. Inmates wet their clothes over and over to find relief. But there's no circulation, no fresh air. It doesn't help. It's inhumane, causes dehydration, and irritability even among the correctional officers. Texas should NEVER have built closed in facilities without fresh air circulation or climate control systems. It's past time to change this and install climate control systems. It can only help! I urge you to heed the voice of reason and your own consciences to find the money to do what, in many cases, was promised when these prisons were built.

Alice Guidry Spiller
Son
Beaumont, TX

My Sonja's been incarcerated almost 4years and another one for 10 months, they should have A/C units in the prison system, the temperature is much hotter than what it used to be, PLEASE HELP ????????????

Vivian Gonzales
Loved one
Bay City, TX

I feel that they don't deserve to be treated and living in the heat with temperatures so high it's inhumane to do that to our loved ones

Margie Mathis
self(RN) and TIFA, TPCA, (Advocates for inmates) representing inmates and staff at Texas units in summer heat
Arlington, TX

HB 3006- (Rep. Canales) Purchase and Installing climate control systems in Texas Department of Criminal Justice facilities. End cruel and unusual punishment , sickness, death, misery and suffering in most of Texas units. Dallas judge stated as unconstitutional. Some kind of cooling system should be in EVERY Texas facility. Inmates are doing their time, but should NOT have to suffer so, neither should the staff. Texas, or no state should allow human beings to be treated like that. It is absolutely INHUMANE..! Bill should be voted on and not left dead in the Senate !

Elmo Gonzales
Self
Bay city, TX

Those incarcerated don't deserve to be in the heat where they are getting sores having heat stokes having to stay wet or sleep on floor to stay cool

Margie Mathis, Ms

self(RN) and TIFA, TPCA, (Advocates for inmates) representing inmates and staff at Texas units in summer heat
Arlington, TX

No human being should have to suffer, get sick, or die at any time who are under the care of Texas Dept Criminal Justice. The intense heat in Texas summers causes constant intense misery and suffering. My son has had to deal with this for nearly 24 years. I suffer right along with him and wonder every year if it will be his last. It can be miserable and dangerous for the staff too. I understand why there has been shortages of staffing. It IS cruel and unusual punishment by definition and a Dallas Judge called it Unconstitutional !! Use the money TDCJ spends to fight the lawsuits to place cooling systems in ALL areas of units, including living areas of the inmates and PLEASE do the humane thing and the right thing to save lives. If it were your loved one in there going through this , you might think differently. Please do it and swiftly as possible, not over 25 years. Thank you.

Stori Kohl

Self

Kyle, TX

Prisons must have climate control. Prisoners are being cooked alive in the Texas heat, it must stop.

Rosie Campos, Mrs.

Self, Retired Academic-Higher Education-Counselor (LPC -Inactive)

Brownsville, TX

The Honorable/Mr. Canales, To the point, I am the mother of an incarcerated young man, my son, who made a mistake that dictated a change in his lifestyle. I implore you to stop the inhumane treatment of our sons/daughters who are suffering due to extreme heat in these confined concrete spaces. The laws which have been passed for our four legged creatures in various cities is good. Yet, our human beings are thrown away as discarded beings into these sweltering environments while we sit comfortably in our comfy chairs. I cry my heart out and pray not only for my son but all prisoners. I ask God to bring the wind closer, for the cold spells to come more frequent, for rain so the concrete containers can cool down. I pray for the politics to evaporate from our legislative chambers. The moon, the stars, the sun is sent to all of us daily than why is it that our leaders turn away from reality. I ask those who oppose such measures to pass, shadow a prisoner for a week. Do it! I thank the Lord that He continues to guide you, Mr. Canales, for you have heard their voices, to give you wisdom and courage in days ahead. Please do not give up. I am a mother who loves her son, proud of his accomplishments, and forgiven his error. Thank you, Mrs. Campos

Odilia Espinoza

self

San Juan, TX

My name is Odilia Espinoza, and I am writing as a concerned citizen and advocate for humane treatment within our criminal justice system, I strongly support HB3006, which mandates the purchase and installation of climate control systems in Texas Department of Criminal Justice facilities. This issue is deeply personal to me, my husband is currently incarcerated in a TDCJ facility. With summer approaching, I worry about his safety as extreme temperatures, especially in Texas, pose a serious health risk to incarcerated individuals, corrections officers, and staff. Every summer, our state experiences dangerously high heat levels that can lead to dehydration, heatstroke, and even death, especially for those with medical conditions, the elderly, and those on certain medications. Installing climate control is not only a matter of human rights and dignity, but also a necessity for public health and safety. No person, regardless of their incarceration status, should be subjected to inhumane conditions that can cause physical harm or death. Furthermore, providing adequate cooling and heating systems will help prevent lawsuits and reduce medical costs associated with heat-related illnesses, ultimately saving taxpayer dollars overall.

I respectfully urge lawmakers to pass HB3006 and affirm Texas's commitment to human rights, safety, and fiscal responsibility. Thank you for your consideration.

Staci Rendon
Self/ Disciple of Christ
San Angelo, TX

To those who have the authority and power to make a difference and save our loved ones who are in TDCJ. I am asking for a change to be made in TDCJ that you say not another life lost for a reason so preventable such as installing A/C units by this summer. The inhumane treatment our loved ones go through each and every day takes a toll not only physically but mentally as well. Each season that brings heat I pray for my son's well being. I pray cooler temperatures come because Texas cold is often more safe than a Texas heat wave where their cells in TDCJ reach 120 degrees even higher. No more deaths no more excuses no more thinking well they are just criminals. Make that change to treat our sons brothers and fathers with basic human decency and basic human rights. I ask for a change in TDCJ. Install proper cooling and heating units on every unit not just cooling mats and fans but true lifesaving cooling units.

Marcia Lewis
N/A
Arlington, TX

It is too hot in Texas to not have air conditioning. The fans sold to the inmates are just nothing more than air movers. The punishment for their crime is being away from society, no need to cook them alive. I request that you support this bill because we need air conditioning in all our prisons. Thank you

Demetria Dalco
Self
Missouri City, TX

My husband has been incarcerated for 11 years in TDCJ. Temperatures inside of these prison walls are not fit for even animals. My husband has to purchase 3 fans in the summertime just to breathe that hot scorching air. He gets sick almost every summer because he is on high blood pressure meds and sometimes cold water did not get passed out on regular intervals when he was at the Ferguson unit. He has seen lots of people pass out from heat exhaustion especially the elderly. I know that these humans are incarcerated because of crimes that they have committed but in the United States we all have the right to certain life necessities such as food, water, clothing . I consider AC heating and cooling as a necessity if you live in Texas where our summers are extreme. The pigs at my husband's old unit even have cooling systems but the humans don't. We do not live in a 3rd world country. TDCJ prisons are being run like Mexican prisons. It's is inhumane and deadly. AC units should have been installed decades ago in my opinion. They have money to fight it out in court. Why not use that money to install these AC units that they claim they can't afford. Then they would not have to pay out these death lawsuits. Nobody should loose their lives from being cooked in between those metal walls at 120 plus degree weather. Please help the guards and TDCJ inmates that are suffering from these extreme conditions. Texas really does need to do better. Thank you for your time.

Scott Henson
self, retired
Austin, TX

The Sunset Commission staff report said you need to close facilities because you can't staff them, mainly because they don't have AC. But those recommendations were not accepted. If you are not going to close those units, you MUST install air conditioning, or you cannot staff them. This state at times seems completely ungoverned, just letting obvious, big problems fester for years on end with no action taken, and this is a good example. Choices have consequences. You can't choose BOTH to keep those extra prisons open and not install AC -- you can't staff them and we already know this. Higher pay will NOT get enough people to work in Texas prisons if you do not fix this. That's a proven fact. Please use some common sense. This has gone on far too long and it was obvious this needed to happen 2 decades ago when the staffing problems became chronic. Play hardball with the Senate to make this happen. It's important.

Karen Franks

Self

Magnolia, TX

My name is Karen Franks. As a tax paying Texas resident, I support the purchase and installation of climate control in Texas prisons. It is a disgrace that our prisoners (and TDCJ employees) are subject to such harsh triple digit temperatures without reprieve. It is inhumane and unacceptable. Please, end this torture now before more people die. TDCJ is supposed to be a "correctional facility" ... the extreme heat, paired with metal doors that become too hot to touch, cinder block walls and poor ventilation turns these buildings into ovens. To turn a blind eye is to be complicit to the TORTURE! We must STOP COOKING INMATES NOW! PLEASE PURCHASE AND INSTALL CLIMATE CONTROL BEFORE THE SUMMER HEAT TAKES ANY MORE LIVES or DAMAGES ANY MORE BRAINS!!!

Thank you.

Kirstina Moore
Tdcj
Abilene, TX

Absolutely—here’s

Subject: In Support of Climate Control in Texas Prisons and Institutions – “85 for Life” Bill

To the Honorable Members of the Texas House of Representatives,

I am writing as a concerned employee of a contracted company that operates within a Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) facility. I see firsthand the effects of extreme heat inside our prisons, and I strongly support the proposed “85 for Life” bill, which calls for implementing air conditioning and heating in correctional institutions across the state.

This isn’t just about comfort—it’s about safety, dignity, and basic human rights. It’s about saving lives.

Inside the Walls: Unbearable and Dangerous Conditions

Temperatures inside prison day rooms can exceed 120 degrees during Texas summers. This is not theoretical—it’s what I witness daily in my role. The heat is suffocating. Imagine trying to sleep in a sweltering housing unit, on a metal bed frame with no mattress, your skin literally burning from the surface. Imagine spending every day in that environment, unable to cool down, to rest, or even to think clearly.

Now ask yourself: how can we expect emotional stability, rehabilitation, or even basic decency in conditions like that?

Inmates are human beings. Many are serving time for mistakes they’ve made, but being incarcerated shouldn’t mean being tortured by heat, denied the ability to sleep, or stripped of all comfort. Climate control is not a luxury—it’s a minimum standard of humane care.

It Affects Us Too: The People Who Work There

The unbearable heat doesn’t just affect inmates—it affects every staff member, officer, and contracted worker who enters the facility. We’re short-staffed, overworked, and stretched thin. Working in these conditions makes everything harder—our mental focus, our emotional resilience, our physical health.

High turnover and burnout are real issues. People don’t want to work in places that feel unsafe and inhumane. Adding air conditioning and heating wouldn’t just help inmates—it would help attract and retain dedicated, qualified staff in a system that’s already struggling to stay afloat.

Where Is the Value of Life?

Texas has long stood on the principle of protecting life. But that value seems to disappear the moment a person enters an institution. What about the lives that are locked behind walls? What about the lives of those who serve those institutions from within?

When we talk about dignity, justice, and rehabilitation, we must include everyone. The lack of climate control sends a clear message that some lives simply matter less. That can’t be the legacy we leave behind.

The Call to Action

We are asking for a baseline of humane treatment—temperature regulation that protects lives, improves mental health outcomes, reduces tension and violence, and creates safer, more stable environments for

jane wilson
self part time college prof
Dallas, TX

Please please do the humane thing and provide proper hvac in texas prisons. i do not have family members in prison, nor have I ever had family incarcerated, but I have been concerned for years about this hazard.

Viviana Washington
Self
Arlington, TX

It is inhumane for the prisoners to suffer in 90° plus weather they are dying in there and suffering, and that causes more tension and more fighting

Carol Gurley
Self
Desoto, TX

We are all God children, so if we need heat, when it's cold and a/c ,when it's hot.Then inmate do. Also.We are all God children, even when we sin

Tiffany Forristal
self
Houston, TX

Hello, my name is Tiffany Forristal. I am representing myself. First I want to thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns about temperatures inside TDCJ facilities.

It's important to me that you know my concerns are deeply personal. Every year as temperatures rise in spring, I worry more when my weekly phone call with my brother is over that it might be the last. Especially in the summer when it is over 100 degrees outside, and inside his unit is even hotter. When on a good day they only get 2 coolers of ice every 6 hours. After sleeping on the concrete floor because everything else is too hot.

Currently, individuals within TDCJ have experienced temperatures up to 149°F. There is a temperature standard for TDCJ's livestock, but not for those incarcerated. 70% of the Texas prison facilities are not fully air-conditioned. The vast majority of people I speak to are unaware of how hot it gets inside the prisons because of the lack of air conditioning.

On a bad day, or week, there is no running water at all, not even to flush toilets. In those cases I've been told by TDCJ staff that the provided 5 gallons of water for 84 people once every 5 hours is sufficient in the summer heat, even though that's less than 1 cup per person. And they have to watch helplessly as their peers with health conditions, and sometimes healthy ones, never return from medical, but it's inexplicably not considered heat related.

The state of Texas is torturing its staff and incarcerated individuals by requiring them to be in dangerous levels of humidity and heat every summer that continues to worsen due to climate change. I am asking for the same humane temperature standards utilized by the Texas County jails, 65° to 85° degrees, to be implemented in all the state-run prison facilities. This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long. I am submitting a public comment to ask you to take action and support HB 3006.

I hope we can all strive towards more humanity. Thanks again for your time and consideration.

Morgan McAllister
Self - Technical Writer
Humble, TX

Hi, my name is Morgan McAllister. Currently, individuals within TDCJ have experienced temperatures up to 149°F. There is a temperature standard for TDCJ's livestock, but not for those incarcerated. 70% of the Texas prison facilities are not fully air-conditioned. The state of Texas is torturing its staff and incarcerated individuals by requiring them to be in dangerous levels of humidity and heat every summer that continues to worsen due to climate change. I am asking for the same humane temperature standards utilized by the Texas County jails, 65° to 85° degrees, to be implemented in all the state-run prison facilities. This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long. I am writing to ask you to take action and support HB3006. Thank you!

Chantal Wallace
Self / Data Engineer
Houston, TX

Hi, my name is Chantal. Currently, individuals within TDCJ have experienced temperatures up to 149°F. There is a temperature standard for TDCJ's livestock, but not for those incarcerated. 70% of the Texas prison facilities are not fully air-conditioned. The state of Texas is torturing its staff and incarcerated individuals by requiring them to be in dangerous levels of humidity and heat every summer that continues to worsen due to climate change. I am asking for the same humane temperature standards utilized by the Texas County jails, 65° to 85° degrees, to be implemented in all the state-run prison facilities. This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long. I am writing to ask you to take action and support HB3006. Thank you!

Irene Gallegos
Self
Boyd, TX

This is an issue of human dignity for all people working and living in TDCJ facilities.

Chrystal Watkins
Self
Princeton, TX

Subjecting inmates to 120° and higher in the prison system in Texas is not only inhumane but can cause long term medical problems and even death. My loved one has already had 2 heat strokes prior to being incarcerated, which makes him super susceptible to over heating more rapidly and more frequently than other people that have not had heat strokes prior. Please ensure this gets resolved for the safety of our loved ones.

De' Ron Williams
Self
Dallas, TX

In TDC for 2.5 years, and I can't tell you how many times a month the ambulance came into the unit and left with a prisoner in a body bag due to heat exhaustion!! The conditions are inhumane, typical conditions historically for my demographic, but that's another story. The temperature reaches over 110 degrees inside prisons and the fans they allow us to purchase are utterly USELESS. The guards and the administration watch us die every summer, I wish the world court would arrest everyone on tdcj payroll one day. Shalom????

Jessica Hinojosa
Self
Houston, TX

I have family members in the system. One is disabled vision impaired. I also have been in the system and know what it's like personally to have to live in those extreme conditions. This bill being passed will be a true blessing for everyone who is living in that situation. We all need to be someone's voice.

Maribel Martinez
Inmates
Houston, TX

There has been so many heat related deaths in the prisons here in Texas. I believe animals are treated better than humans. Inmates have to lay in cold concrete , use toilet or sink water to stay cool, don't receive enough drinking water, working in the heat, etc.... The temperature is very high here in Texas during the summer months. This is also needed for employees who work in the heat- unacceptable working conditions in the USA.

Reyes Martínez
self
Houston, TX

There should be a/c available in the TDCJ facilities they matter as much as we do. They are in there serving there sentence, they deserve to be treated equally

Patricia Jenkins
Self/disabled
Fort Worth, TX

My name is Patricia D Jenkins and I was incarcerated in TDCJ in 2009. I can testify to winters in tdcj facilities in the winter. I can tell you that it was so cold, I could not sleep due to the temperature in the dorm. I put every article of clothing, including my boots, on to try to get warm enough to sleep to no avail. 65° would make such a difference to the men and women incarcerated in these facilities. I cannot attest to the heat during summer because I was only there for 5 months total. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Patricia D Jenkins
817-231-1970

Rebecca Trevino

Self

Dallas, TX

The dignity of every human being as being made in the image of their creator, God. Texas has the nation's highest prison population, but despite Texas having some of the most extreme temperatures in the country, we have no law requiring heating or air conditioning in Texas prisons. Texas Baptists' Phillippi church ministry involves 1,750 inmates in 350 groups in 113 jails and prisons. Many of these are Texas prisons without regulated temperatures in the living quarters. Further, Texas Baptists endorses chaplains to serve in TDCJ facilities. In the six TDCJ regions, four of the six regional chaplains and approximately 1 in 4 chaplains overall have been endorsed to serve by Texas Baptists. The Texas Commission on Jail Standards contained in the Texas Administrative Code sets legal requirements for jails in Texas. Section 261.160 requires that, "Temperature levels shall be reasonably maintained between 65 degrees Fahrenheit and 85 degrees Fahrenheit in all occupied areas." While Texas has seen the value of these standards in county jails, it has no similar requirement for state prisons. Additionally, Chapter 91 of the Texas Administrative Code regulates dog and cat breeders. Section 91.102(a) states, "The ambient temperature must not fall below 45° F (7.2° C) for more than 2 consecutive hours when dogs or cats are present and must not rise above 85° F (29.5° C) for more than 2 consecutive hours when dogs or cats are present." This regulation is one instance of how Texas law fails to protect human beings from exposure to extreme heat and cold the same way it protects animals. Air conditioning and heat requirements would not only recognize the human dignity of those incarcerated in Texas prisons, but they would also demonstrate the value Texas residents place on the public servants who work on TDCJ's staff. TDCJ staff provide a valuable service to the people of Texas and deserve safe and healthy working conditions. In the two-year period of 2022-2023 nearly 80 workers compensation claims related to heat conditions were filed by TDCJ staff. Texas already has laws and agency rules providing for humane and safe living conditions in other contexts, including jails. I urge you to vote in favor of HB 3006.

Brenda Lindfors

Self, Marketing and Communications Executive

Austin, TX

It is imperative that we fund air conditioning/climate control systems for inmates/TDCJ facilities. This is a humanitarian and public health issue. It is cruel and inhumane not to provide our incarcerated prisoners with this basic accommodation.

Candice Moore

Self, retired

Austin, TX

This is simply the right thing to do. Not passing this bill is cruel

Samantha Barrow
Self, Educator
Pflugerville, TX

Prisons are places for rehabilitation. They are places for redemption. There is no excuse for the conditions that inmates are currently living in. How can an inmate think about a better future when it's clear that government agencies don't care about their basic human rights and safety. In the last few years, we've seen sustained streaks of 100+ degree weather. Most Texans can go home and enjoy air conditioning. Denying that same right to inmates is inhumane. They depend on the systems in place to meet basic needs and it shouldn't even be a discussion about whether or not no climate control is required in one of the hottest states in America. We should not expect, nor accept, that inmates suffer inhumane conditions as "part of their punishment". To allow this to continue is an admission that our lawmakers don't believe in the ability for rehabilitation within our current prison system, and instead see the system as a way to impart continued suffering on people who are already paying their dues.

You must vote yes to require the purchase and installation of climate control systems in facilities operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. It is not the job of the prison system to determine whether humane treatment is reasonable given the status of those within their facilities. The courts have already made those decisions. Inmates within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice deserve basic human rights. That includes a reasonable expectation of safety when in the hands of a government agency like the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Vote yes for HB 3006.

Louis Campbell
None
Dallas, TX

This needs to be done. People are dying inside on the Texas heat. People with critical disease are dying and have only 2 or 3 year sentences.

Ann Jones
Self
Austin, TX

Treat prisoners humanely with reasonable temperatures in prisons.

Rebecca Buckley McIlwain
Self
Houston, TX

I strongly support this bill in support of installing climate control systems at prison facilities in Texas. As a person of faith, I was appalled and disheartened that my beloved Texas would allow men and women to suffer under such stifling heat and show disregard for common human decency in this way. We are better than this. We must do better. Even if we did not have a huge budget surplus, this would be a top priority, but not to rectify this problem when we have so much "money in the bank" is simply unconscionable. Please pass this this bill out of committee and pray that it makes it all the way to being signed into law. Thank you.

Leah Bower, Ms
Self
Gainesville, TX

I am for air conditioning and climate control in TDCJ facilities.

Diana Smith, Mrs.
Self
Murchison, TX

Dear House I am in full support of HB 3006/Canales. The climate is changing for the worst. People die every summer from heat related illness. The guards suffer along side the inmates from extreme heat. The only difference is the guards can go home to A.C and adequate ventilation. They get a reprieve , the inmates (our family and loved ones) do not. It's 24 hours a day of unbearable heat and really bad attitude for all involved. Please consider this bill and help push it forward. It is the humane thing to do. We must change with the times and all that goes with that. Extreme temperatures in Prisons are killing people. I pray for compassion and action for the hopeless.

Thank you for your time

Vicki Clifton, Ms
TPCA, self, incarcerated grandson
Amarillo, TX

My grandson is serving a 48 year sentence. He was housed for 6 years at Lynaugh Unit near Fort Stockton. He was recently transferred to Smith Unit, near LaMesa for a hardship transfer to be nearer to us, his grandparents as his Mother is deceased. I implore you to pass HB3006. During summer mo this his cell would reach temperatures over 120 degrees, making sleep or any other activity near impossible. Many nights, he would wet his sheets down and lie on the floor searching for just a small respite from the unrelenting heat. For days I end, I would talk to him on the phone and try to encourage him as the relentless heat of the summer would drag on. Depression and hopelessness is common along with irritability. Also there is increased illness from the heat...headaches, neausea, dehydration.

Dog shelters are required by law to be air conditioned, why aren't our prisons? These prisoners are human beings, not animals. I thought incarcerated was for the purpose of rehabilitation & punishment, but this is torture and inhumane. May you find in your humanity to finally pass this legislation so that more lives are not lost unnecessarily to this heat that is only going to get worse. I appreciate your consideration in this most critical matter.

Mary Nichols
self. retired
Austin, TX

Yes, we know. Texas is hot in the summers and always has been. But, first, it has always been inhumane and destructive to inmates to spend 4-5 months in excessive heat. Second, let's face it, climate change is real. It's getting hotter in Texas in the summer and elsewhere. Excessive heat can make people irritable, which probably makes inmates feel worse in an already difficult environment. Please continue to advocate for these future constituents and neighbors.

Aijaz Ahmed
Salaam Reentry Progam
Spring, TX

Salaam Reentry provides the incarcerated opportunities to self-reflect in constructive environment so they work to change the inside by their positive behavior. It helps to be in physically, emotionally and spiritually in the safe environment. Providing physical comfort is the easy part and everyone responsible will be hold accountable on that day. May you be blessed in bringing ease in people's lives, so upon reentry society they may make better choices. God Willing

K Renee Monroe
Self/TPCA
Spicewood, TX

I am writing to you today to urge you to support SB169. My son has been in the McConnell unit for 22 years. In the summer they get temperatures up to 130° inside the prison. This not only affects the inmates but the officers! Last year one of the female officers had a heat stroke and lost her baby, another lady was in the tower waiting for her replacement that didn't show up and died because no one could come up there with water for her. Our prisons are so severely understaffed that cannot operate correctly. Austin just passed an ordinance that there has to be air conditioning in every apartment and home in the city. There are ordinances for dog kennels to keep dogs cool and warm! I know the inmates have made mistakes but they deserve humane treatment. Who would want to go to work in an environment that gets up to 130°? That is most of the cause of our severe understaffing problem in Texas prisons. What would Jesus do?

I strongly urge you to pass this bill it would help so many and so many ways.

Thank you for your time and for considering passing this bill. It would mean so much for so many and their families that worry about their loved ones never coming home because they died unnecessarily from weather conditions.

Lisa Brat Martinez
Actor/Hugs & Kisses Foundation
Houston, TX

Let's talk about basic human dignity.

Yes, inmates are serving time for a reason—but being incarcerated should not mean being sentenced to cruel and inhumane conditions. Texas heat is brutal, and the fact that many prisons still don't have air conditioning for the people living inside them is unacceptable. These are human beings—we're talking fathers, sons, mothers, daughters—some of whom are still awaiting trial or serving time for non-violent offenses.

What makes it worse is that the officers and staff working in these same facilities do have access to air conditioning. That means the state knows how dangerous and unbearable the heat can be—but chooses not to extend that basic protection to the inmates.

This isn't about politics or being 'soft on crime'—this is about humanity, public health, and doing what's right. No one should be cooking in a cell in 110-degree weather. We can do better, and we must do better.

Connie Wright
Self - home health
Chester, TX

Dear Honorable Members of the Texas Legislature:

I am writing to share my concerns about the situation involving the excessive heat in Texas prisons.

I have read that U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman said that housing Texas prison inmates in sweltering facilities that lack air conditioning is “plainly unconstitutional,” in a 91-page ruling on March 26. I believe the Texas Legislature is an honorable group of men and women who want to follow the Constitution.

Due to climate change, the heat is increasing each year. The situation isn’t going away and more and more people will suffer and die needlessly if it’s not remedied.

This article (<https://www.dallasobserver.com/news/a-federal-judge-rules-on-texas-prison-heat-conditions-22072517>) by the Dallas Observer states that Texas A&M conducted a study in 2022 that tracked and measured prison heat. They found that one unit reached a maximum of 149 degrees during one of the state's regular heat waves. They also revealed that there is a high risk of heat stroke fatalities when the heat index rises above 125 degrees. This study by Texas A&M also found that 14 people die per year in Texas prisons from heat-related deaths.

Staff at the units is affected as much as the inmates and the excessive heat causes staff shortages during the summer months. And, we all know that in Texas, the “summer months” can easily stretch from May through September.

This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long.

Some people argue against the idea of putting air conditioning in all the units, and fully air conditioning each unit, by saying that not everyone in the general population has air-conditioned homes. This is true, but those individuals work in air-conditioned locations unless they’re retired. Also, the homes of people in the general population are not made out of concrete blocks, with little or no ventilation, as is true for many of the prison units. People in the general population can stay with relatives or friends who have air conditioning on extremely hot days.

I understand that it is easy to take the attitude that if people “can’t do the time, they shouldn’t do the crime.” However, incarceration itself is the punishment; the extreme heat shouldn’t be part of it.

The temperature in Texas county jails is kept at a maximum of 85 degrees which is humane and shows concern for the welfare of the inmates and the staff.

As I stated at the beginning of this message, I believe the Texas Legislature is an honorable group of men and women, and I believe you are concerned about all the citizens of Texas.

Thank you for your time and the attention you are giving this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,
Connie Wright

Laura Gallier
Self-retired CPA
Houston, TX

Please support HB 3006.

I am very concerned about HVAC in TDCJ in part because I'm close friends with an inmate but also because I care about the humanity of all people, including those behind bars.

In addition to supporting the bill, I hope you will also advocate for these provisions related to the bill:

- The HVAC needs to be in the inmate cells in addition to the communal areas for several reasons. One, obviously, it gets hot in the cells and inmates spend a lot of time there. Two, the prisons are horribly understaffed, and that makes moving inmates from their cells to communal areas dangerous and limited. Three, the inmates in administrative segregation hardly ever leave their cells and require even more staff to be moved around safely.

- The State has a huge budget surplus and yet I don't see anything about this cost in the proposed budget for TDCJ.

- A District Judge recently ruled the excessive heat in Texas prisons is clearly unconstitutional.

- The extreme heat is killing inmates, in addition to causing heat related illnesses. It also impacts TDCJ workers.
<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/22/texas-prisons-heat-deaths/>

I hope the 100,000+ TDCJ inmates can count on you. They can't very well advocate for themselves.

Ariel Deshotel
Self
Houston, TX

Hi, my name is Ariel Deshotel. Currently, individuals within TDCJ have experienced temperatures up to 149°F. There is a temperature standard for TDCJ's livestock, but not for those incarcerated. 70% of the Texas prison facilities are not fully air-conditioned. The state of Texas is torturing its staff and incarcerated individuals by requiring them to be in dangerous levels of humidity and heat every summer that continues to worsen due to climate change. I am asking for the same humane temperature standards utilized by the Texas County jails, 65° to 85° degrees, to be implemented in all the state-run prison facilities. This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long. I am writing to ask you to take action and support HB3006. Thank you!

Ariel Deshotel
Self
Houston, TX

Hi, my name is Ariel Deshotel. Currently, individuals within TDCJ have experienced temperatures up to 149°F. There is a temperature standard for TDCJ's livestock, but not for those incarcerated. 70% of the Texas prison facilities are not fully air-conditioned. The state of Texas is torturing its staff and incarcerated individuals by requiring them to be in dangerous levels of humidity and heat every summer that continues to worsen due to climate change. I am asking for the same humane temperature standards utilized by the Texas County jails, 65° to 85° degrees, to be implemented in all the state-run prison facilities. This issue has cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in lawsuits, is hazardous, inhumane, and has been allowed to continue for too long. I am writing to ask you to take action and support HB3006. Thank you!

Linda Nichols, Mrs
Self
Mansfield, TX

Please remember these are humans they must have heat and air conditioning to live.

Becky Smith
Self, Nonprofit Director
Houston, TX, TX

We must be humane towards everyone. Please consider the suffering of any human being in our TX heat.

Marco Reyes
Independent
Fate, TX

This is a matter of human dignity, value, and worth of individuals from public servants to inmates. The conditions without air and proper heat are harsh living conditions if we are to help these men and women enter back into society. The mental and physical side effects can be devastating upon entering society or for public servants to even be effective at their work. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Teresa Johnson, Mrs
TDCJ
Red Oak, TX

I would like to say on behalf of all inmates, especially my nephew, who take seizure medication, that climate control is a must in all of these prisons. There are way too many deaths occurring due to the hellish Texas heat in these units. My nephew has to wet his sheets and wrap them around him with the fan on to barely get any relief. I know the State of Texas has the money to provide installation of the climate control systems. Please pass this bill before someone else dies. Also, so that the units can keep staff members employed. Alot quit because of the heat. Again, I urge you to pass this bill, Texas has the money, you can't tell me otherwise. Thank you, and God Bless!

Velia Reyes, Teacher assistant
Self
Heath, TX

This is a matter of human dignity for all at TDCJ facilities including public servants and inmates.

Charlotte Chandler, Mrs
Self
Forney, TX

I support this bill for the human treatment of inmates and this bill should be marked urgent. Another team needs to be put in place to make sure TDCJ moves quickly.

Cindy Fountain
Self/ Retail Merchandiser
Cleburne, TX

I urge the committee to support this bill. Even the Officials from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, which oversees the state's 101 prison facilities, asked lawmakers for \$118 million over the next biennium to install air conditioning in about 11,000 units. We need to start somewhere.

Also, a District Judge recently ruled excessive heat in Texas prisons is unconstitutional. Please do the right thing.
Thank you.

- The extreme heat is killing inmates, in addition to causing heat-related illnesses. It also impacts TDCJ workers.
<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/22/texas-prisons-heat-deaths/>

I hope the 100,000+ TDCJ inmates can count on you.

Vivianna Longoria
Self PCT
Brownsville, TX

They're not animals they are human just like us and there are a lot of people all together in one small unit it's not fair for them

Derek Cortez
Texas Harm Reduction Alliance
Austin, TX

stop the maddness

Becky Halpin
Self
Pflugerville, TX

All Texas prisons need air conditioning in all the living, working, dining and healthcare spaces. Texas summers are so hot that prisoners in uncooked spaces are dying of heat related illnesses. This is cruel and inhumane. Lack of air conditioning is also causing prison staff health issues and exacerbates the high rate of staff turnover. Please support this bill to put air conditioning in Texas prisons. Thank you.

Linda Mikolajek, Ms
Nami Texas
Austin, TX

My name is Linda Mikolajek and I am a member of the advocacy committee for NAMI Central TX. . I am writing to urge you to please support this bill.

Sandra DeLeon, Parent
Self Tifa
Corpus Christi, TX

The mere fact that human beings do not have air conditioning is unconstitutional and inhumane. It increases aggravation, frustration, anger and leads to unnecessary violence amongst those incarcerated and also those on staff. This also leads to under staffing issues as many employees do not show up for work due to the heat. There are hundreds of loved ones incarcerated who have undiagnosed health issues and diagnosed health issues that are gravely affected by these conditions. They are already serving their sentence and this should not be a death sentence for them. The state is losing more money by all the lawsuits brought against them, compared to the expense of installing what is required by law. can sleep at night knowing that people are dying in these extreme conditions, you have no business in holding your position. Please consider and quicken the installation of these units. Provers 12:10 A righteous man has regard for the life of his beast, but the compassion of the wicked is cruel..... How much more does God expect for man?

Margaret Fowler
Self
Austin, TX

I support HB3006. Texas inmates should be treated humanely. Such an investment in their care will help in their rehabilitation.

Dan De Leon
Self/Facilitator for T.I.F.A corpus Christi Texas
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

The lack of climate control in Texas prisons as a detrimental impact on the health and well-being of both inmates and staff, leading to increased risk of heat related, illnesses and deaths. This is further exacerbated by the Texas Department of crematory justice, is limited and in consistory implement station of his medication measures. Studies have Sean a clear link between extreme heat and more Talladega in prison without air conditioning. For example, a study by Texas A&M University found that temperature inside I'm cold prison units can average 110°F. The heat Kenworth and pre-exist in medical conditions, included heart disease, diabetes, and other elements. The combination of heat, isolation, and lack of adequate resources can negatively affect mental health, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and behavioral issues. Correctional officers also faced dangerous working conditions due to the heat, particularly during summer months. Lack of air conditioning in Texas prisons constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. Elderly prisoners, those with pre-existing medical conditions, and those on medication's that affect their ability to regulate body temperature are at greater risk. While the TDCJ has implemented some measures, such as providing ice, water, and fans, these measures are often inadequate and consistently applied. Extreme heat can also affect prison operations, leading to decreased productivity and increased risks of disturbances. In conclusion, the lack of climate control in Texas prisons poses significant risks to the health and well-being of inmates and staff, highlighting the need for comprehensive and sustained efforts to address this critical issue.

Tina Flores
Self/retired nurse
GALVESTON, TX

Dear members, I ask for your support of HB3006. The summer heat in Texas is an issue that is well known to us all. We have many months of hot temperatures compared to cold. The hot temps seem to be worsening with each season. We all have a/c in our homes and cars. We all work in buildings with a/c, unless our jobs are outdoors. I have seen firsthand from contact visits with my LO some of the heat related medical problems. He has had rashes on his scalp, face, neck, and hands from the sweat that occurs with the heat. He is not in a cell by himself, but in a large room that houses 50 men together. The unit he is at is a transfer facility, but because of the increase population and overcrowding, the unit is made into a long term unit. As a result he is in a large room with an overhead fan, no windows, no adequate ventilation and bunkbeds lined up along all the walls. As per the TDCJ policies, the inmates are allowed to purchase up to 2 small fans to keep with them in their cells to provide some relief. Due to the holding areas being used as more permanent housing, there are not adequate plugs in these large rooms, so as a result none of these 50 men can purchase fans. They are allowed crowded into these large rooms where the temps can get in excess over 114 degrees or more. The area is hot and humid and as a result they sweat and thus sweat results in heat rashes. They share a large water cooler for the 50 of them. It is supposed to be supplied with cold water and should be added ice at intervals during day. This isn't always possible and is worse in past several years due to shortages at units. They can take a shower, but with only 3-5 shower stalls for 50 men, they are not able to take multiple showers a day to help cool off. Also, in the summer the water in showers runs hot and it runs cold in the winter. If an inmate develops a rash, it is difficult to get seen in medical. There is a fee charged now for each visit. If the inmate has no money, he can't get seen. When they are seen, their "complaint" is usually disregarded or they are told there is "nothing" that can be done. As a nurse I am also aware of "jock itch" in men who sweat a lot and have no a/c to prevent this. It is a miserable condition and worse, when there is no treatment for it. Boils also are common on the neck and back of people who have sweat buildup of their glands.

Heat stroke can also occur especially to those inmates who work outside with little relief from the heat, as well as those who are subject to intense heat in a crowded, humid area without proper a/c. These conditions are cruel and inhumane. The swine on some TDCJ units have A/C in the building they are housed at, at the expense of taxpayers. The county jails are mandated to provide inside temps of at least 74-76 degrees, why not the state prisons? Please consider providing A/C. These people are human beings. They are there to serve their sentence of time, not a DEATH SENTENCE. What if it was your loved one?

Rebecca Allen
Self- Assessment Specialist for a school district
Bastrop, TX

It is heartbreaking that the issue of installing air conditioning in all TDCJ facilities has not yet been resolved. Please do the humane for inmates as well as TDCJ employees. It is cruel to have inmates suffer in the sweltering Texas heat. Losing one's freedom is supposed to be the consequence of breaking the law, not being punished by inhumane conditions. It is painful for loved ones of those incarcerated to know what the inmates must endure. Please be kind and sane humans and finally fix this insanity. Thank you.

Kelly Miller, Mrs
Self/Registered Nurse
Weatherford, TX

Learning that Texas prisons have no Air Conditioning was shocking. Heat related injuries and deaths are bound to occur with our hot Texas climate when individuals are unable to get out of the heat and into a cooled environment. I've always been a supporter of people working in law enforcement and at the same time a believer of fair treatment and second chances for individuals who make mistakes. It is my desire to see the changes necessary to reflect these values. Please consider this as a top priority and install climate control systems throughout facilities operated by the criminal justice system now.

Heather Rainwater, Mrs.
Self, Retired
Richardson, TX

In Support of HB 3006 (Rep. Terry Canales)

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments to you, as I am currently unable to travel. This Bill addresses the issue of the lack of humane temperatures in Texas prisons.

I'm not going to speak about the inhumanity of this issue, as you as a body have heard about this ad nauseum. Texas Jails have been legally required to keep temperatures between 65 and 85 degrees since 1994; and yet we have not required this of our prisons.

On March 19 of this year, my Pastor Emeritus, Dr. Gene Getz, was honored in the Texas Senate for his expository teachings of the Bible, to include the teachings of Jesus. Lieutenant Governor Patrick, speaking of the Texas Senate, said "This is a Christ-centered Legislative body".

I know this does not apply to all of you, I am only speaking to those of you to whom it does. Today, in this Holy week, my question for you is this: Whom do you serve?

Do you serve the merciful itinerant teacher who walked the dusty streets of Galilee and healed the sick, cast out the demons, called out the Pharisees and taught these words "I was in prison and you came to visit me ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:36, 40)

and inspired these words "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." Hebrews 13:3

As a follower of Jesus in this position of power, you've been entrusted to administer GOD's riches justly. Do not withhold them from acts of mercy.

These Bills have been traveling through this Legislature for Session after Session, languishing to death in Committees. As a follower of Jesus, do not withhold your vote for mercy.

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your GOD. Micah 6:8.

Today, I urge you with great urgency to vote FOR HB 3006, because the deadly heat of summer is fast approaching, again. Thank you.

Jennifer Toon
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance and Self
Austin, TX

I'm writing in strong support of HB 3006 by Rep. Canales because the oppressive heat inside Texas prisons is not just inhumane, it's dangerous, and it's fueling a crisis.

As a formerly incarcerated woman, I lived through those scorching Texas summers with no air conditioning. When it's over 100 degrees in a locked cell, your brain starts to feel like it's boiling. You can't breathe, can't sleep, can't think straight. That kind of heat breaks people down.

It also makes prison more violent. People start lashing out on each other and on themselves. I saw women hurt themselves during the hottest months. Tempers flare. Fights break out. The mental health toll is real, and the heat only pushes folks further into despair.

This constant crisis doesn't just hurt incarcerated people it's driving staff out, too. Correctional officers are working 12-16 hour shifts in unbearable heat. The burnout is real. Units are understaffed, and when there aren't enough people to safely manage a unit, the risk of harm skyrockets. People sit in cells for days, medical needs go unmet, and tension builds until something snaps. We cannot afford to keep ignoring this. HB 3006 lays out a phased, fiscally responsible plan to install climate control in TDCJ units with clear deadlines and capped funding. This is about safety, plain and simple. Safe conditions for staff. Safe conditions for people trying to survive inside who just want to return home to their families and communities better.
