

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2498
By: Campos
Criminal Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised regarding the use of certain Internet applications that provide a temporary or disposable telephone number. It has been noted that some individuals will acquire these temporary phone numbers with the aim of repeatedly harassing others, which often leads to stress for the victims and negatively impacts their mental health. H.B. 2498 seeks to address this issue by creating a harassment offense for a person who makes obscene, intimidating, or threatening communications from a temporary or disposable telephone number.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill expressly does one or more of the following: creates a criminal offense, increases the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or changes 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

H.B. 2498 amends the Penal Code to create a Class B misdemeanor harassment offense for a person who, with intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another, makes obscene, intimidating, or threatening telephone calls or other electronic communications from a temporary or disposable telephone number provided by an Internet application or other technological means.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.