

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4076
By: White
Juvenile Justice & Family Issues
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised regarding the condition of secure correctional facilities operated by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD). It has been suggested that these facilities need to modernize in order to better serve Texas youth. There have been calls for TJJD to address their deferred maintenance cost, increase facility energy efficiency, create savings to satisfy incarcerated justice-involved health care costs, achieve staff utilization efficiency, and increase frontline correctional staff compensation. The current juvenile justice system encumbers TJJD, which could operate more efficiently with the ability to outsource operational and maintenance costs in a build-to-lease agreement with a private vendor. H.B. 4076 seeks to address these issues by providing for a modernization plan for post-adjudication secure correctional facilities operated by TJJD and a task force to evaluate those facilities.

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

H.B. 4076 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD), in coordination with the regionalization plan for keeping children closer to home in lieu of commitment to secure facilities operated by TJJD, to develop and implement a plan to modernize the secure facilities. The bill does the following with regard to the plan:

- sets out the required components of the plan;
- requires TJJD to consult with stakeholders and experts in developing the plan;
- requires new facilities built under the plan to be named for juvenile correctional officers or staff who were killed in the course of their TJJD employment or who made significant contributions to public safety in Texas; and
- requires TJJD to develop the plan not later than January 1, 2022.

H.B. 4076 establishes a task force to conduct a thorough evaluation of TJJD secure correctional facilities. The bill provides for the appointment of the task force and requires the task force, not later than September 1, 2022, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the legislature recommendations regarding which secure correctional facilities operated by TJJD should be:

- renovated and continued in operation as a secure correctional facility by TJJD;
- renovated and used for a purpose other than such a secure correctional facility; or
- repurposed by an entity other than TJJD.

The task force is abolished December 1, 2022.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.