

SUBJECT: Allowing grants for pretrial programs for pregnant or parenting defendants

COMMITTEE: Corrections — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — White, Allen, Bailes, Bowers, Dean, Morales, Neave, Sherman, Stephenson

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Jason Vaughn, Texas Young Republicans; Koretta Brown; Mia Greer (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lauren Johnson, ACLU of Texas; Terra Tucker, Alliance for Safety and Justice; Hal Wuertz, Austin Justice Coalition; Julia Egler, National Alliance on Mental Illness-Texas; Kathryn Freeman, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission; Lindsey Linder, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition; Lauren Oertel, Texas Inmate Families Association; Arnold Patrick and Michael Wolfe, Texas Probation Association; Alexis Tatum, Travis County Commissioners Court; Nataly Saucedo, United Ways of Texas; Margarita Luna; Kirsten Ricketts)

Against — None

On — Manny Rodriguez, Texas Department of Criminal Justice

BACKGROUND: Government Code sec. 509.011 permits the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Community Justice Assistance Division to award state aid to departments, agencies, or nonprofit organizations for certain purposes related to the division's responsibilities, including the development and operation of pretrial and presentencing services.

Some have suggested that pretrial diversion programs could be beneficial for defendants who are pregnant or the primary caregiver of a child.

DIGEST: CSHB 1374 would allow the Community Justice Assistance Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to award grants to a department for the development and operation of a pretrial intervention program for defendants who were pregnant at the time of placement into the program

or who were the primary caretaker of a child younger than age.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.