

**SUBJECT:** Expanding access to criminal history records for certain institutions

**COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security & Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Guillen, Jarvis Johnson, Bowers, Canales, Dorazio, Goodwin, Harless, Holland, Troxclair

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — Julie Turnbull, Dallas DA Office and Texas Association Specialty Courts (*Registered, but did not testify*: Clifford Sparks, City of Dallas; Julio Gonzalez, Dallas Police Department; David Batton, Harris County Deputies Organization FOP 39; Luis Soberon, Texas 2036; Susan Stewart)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Elena Walch)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Journey Sais; Michelle Farris, Texas Dept of Public Safety)

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 411.083(b)(4) requires the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to grant access to criminal history records to a person working on a research or statistical project that meets certain requirements established in statute.

Concerns have been raised that agencies who fund their research through grants and municipal funds cannot access bulk data from state and national criminal databases, which can result in agencies running costly and labor-intensive individual criminal histories.

**DIGEST:** HB 1184 would specify that a research organization or public or private institution of higher education would be granted access to criminal history records under sec. 411.083(b)(4). The bill also would specify that the research project that the person or institution was working on would have to be related to the administration of criminal justice and approved by DPS. The bill would remove the requirement that projects be funded by

state funds and instead require that projects be funded in whole or in part by a criminal justice grant or government funds.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.