

**SUBJECT:** Allowing inmates to obtain certain professional licenses

**COMMITTEE:** Corrections — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Herrero, Kacal, Allen, V. Jones, R. Lopez, Sherman, Swanson, Toth  
0 nays  
1 absent — Murr

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jacquie Benestante, Autism Society of Texas; Matthew Garcia, Dallas Regional Chamber; Mandi Zapata, Lioness Justice Impacted Women’s Alliance; Marci Simmons, Statewide Leadership Council, Lioness Justice Impacted Women's Alliance; Cole Meyer, Texas Appleseed; Megan Mauro, Texas Association of Business; Charlie Malouff, Texas C.U.R.E., Inc; Amite Dominick, Texas Prisons Community Advocates; Jennifer Allmon, The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops)  
  
Against — None  
  
On — Christina Kaiser, Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; Kristina Hartman, Windham School District (*Registered, but did not testify*: Robert O'Banion, Windham School District)

**BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that allowing inmates to obtain certain professional licenses could help to address a gap in the workforce and create opportunities for people reentering society post-incarceration.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 823 would allow the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation to adopt rules authorizing the issuance of an air conditioning and refrigeration license, an electrician license, or barber and cosmetology licenses to an inmate of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

The bill would allow TDCJ inmates to perform air conditioning and refrigeration-related, electrical-related, or barbering or cosmetology work without a license if the work was performed as part of a reentry program or under supervision acceptable by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.