

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1578
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Criminal Justice
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, gang-related criminal activity, along with organized crime, is conducted across the state. Associations of street gangs that move across regions of the state serve to frustrate efforts by law enforcement agencies to suppress gang-related crimes. A statewide, coordinated approach, led by the office of attorney general to track migration trends of gangs and gang identification, would aid law enforcers in combating gang-related crimes.

The office of attorney general would compile a gang resource system through the use of Internet technology. And through the use of a secure law enforcement Internet website, gang investigative units can more accurately anticipate where to concentrate gang suppression tactics, as well as assist law enforcement in interpreting particular gang identifiers such as tatoos, graffiti, and monikers. S.B. 1578 establishes an electronic gang resource system maintained through the office of the attorney general.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1578 establishes an electronic gang resource system maintained through the office of the attorney general.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 61, Code of Criminal Procedure, by adding Article 61.08, as follows:

Art. 61.08. GANG RESOURCE SYSTEM. Requires the attorney general's office to establish an electronic gang resource system to provide law enforcement agencies with information about street gangs in the state. Sets forth information required to be included in the system. Requires law enforcement agencies, within reason, to provide information to the system, upon request by the attorney general's office. Requires the attorney general's office to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in collecting and maintaining the accuracy of the information. Prohibits information specifically identifying an offender from being maintained in the system. Provides that the information shall be used in investigating gang-related crimes, but shall not be included in affidavits or subpoenas used in other legal or judicial proceedings. Limits access to the system to law enforcement personnel. Sets forth access format for the system. Authorizes the attorney general's office to coordinate with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to include groups in the system identified by the Security Threat Group Management Office of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

SECTION 2. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.