

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R11313 HLT-D

H.B. 3736
By: McReynolds (Hinojosa)
Criminal Justice
5/18/2007
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

High caseloads in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division are diminishing the ability of parole officers to provide the highest quality supervision of parolees in order to protect the citizens of Texas and ensure parolees are successfully reintegrated into society.

While there is a national consensus that a caseload of 60 regular supervision cases is appropriate, current Texas statute does not contain recommended maximum caseload standards for parole officers, many of whom have caseloads in excess of 90. The stress of such workloads is driving away good, experienced, trained officers. When a parole officer leaves state service, the officer's caseload is spread out among the remaining officers, compounding the problem for those who stay and increasing the overall turnover rate.

H.B. 3736 requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to establish maximum caseload guidelines for parole officers. The bill weights the maximum caseload guidelines for those parole officers managing active releasees who are in specialized programs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter D, Chapter 508, Government Code, by adding Section 508.1142, as follows:

Sec. 508.1142. PAROLE OFFICER MAXIMUM CASELOADS. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to adopt a policy that establishes guidelines for a maximum caseload for each parole officer in a certain manner.

(b) Requires TDCJ, if it is unable to meet the maximum caseload guidelines, to submit a report to the Legislative Budget Board, at the end of each fiscal year in which TDCJ fails to meet the guidelines, stating the amount of money needed by TDCJ to meet the guidelines.

SECTION 2. Requires TDCJ to adopt the policy establishing guidelines for maximum caseloads, as required by Section 508.1142, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than September 1, 2007.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.