

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
87R5434 BDP-D

H.B. 2036  
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Criminal Justice  
5/20/2021  
Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

It has been noted that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) has a strict interpretation of the term "close relative of a deceased victim" as used in state law when governing parole and mandatory supervision. Under this interpretation, the definition excludes certain individuals from guaranteed victim rights, such as the right to testify at a parole hearing of their close relative's offender. While all individuals who wish to protest a parole are currently able to register in the TDCJ victim services division notification system and are being granted that opportunity by the current Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP), this opportunity comes at the discretion of the BPP and has the potential to change over time. H.B. 2036 expands the definition of "close relative of a deceased victim" to include close relatives of victims who die due to circumstances not related to the offense, in order to allow these relatives to receive victims' rights and continue to exercise these rights on behalf of the victim who has died.

H.B. 2036 amends current law relating to the definition of close relative of a deceased victim for purposes of certain laws relating to the release of an inmate on parole or to mandatory supervision.

### **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 Section 508.117(g)(1), Government Code, to redefine "close relative of a deceased victim" for Section 508.117 (Victim Notification) to mean a person who, regardless of whether the victim's death was related to the offense committed, was related to the individual in certain manners.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.