

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2158
By: Campbell
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Hundreds of thousands of children are reported missing in America each year. As part of an effort to help locate missing children, the American Football Coaches Association created the National Child Identification Program more than 20 years ago with the goal of fingerprinting millions of children nationwide. These kits were distributed through stadiums, churches, schools, law enforcement agencies, and community events. Now, more than 70 million kits have been distributed, making the program the largest child identification effort ever conducted. In 2006, a collaborative effort was formed whereby the Texas Association of School Administrators began to disseminate kits across Texas to students in grades K–6. To ensure this vital program continues in Texas, S.B. 2158 codifies a collaboration between the Texas Education Agency and the National Child Identification Program to promote and provide inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kits to parents or guardians of children in grades K–6. The kits are voluntary, kept at home, and may be submitted by the parent or guardian to federal, state, tribal, or local law enforcement in an effort to locate and return missing or trafficked children.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 2158 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide to all public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kits to be distributed through the district or school on request to the parent or legal custodian of any kindergarten, elementary, or middle school student. A parent or legal custodian who receives such a kit may submit the kit to federal, state, tribal, or local law enforcement to help locate and return a missing or trafficked child. Implementation of a provision of the bill by TEA is mandatory only if a specific appropriation is made for that purpose.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.