

**SUBJECT:** Establishing temperature standards for state prison and jail facilities

**COMMITTEE:** Corrections — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Herrero, Kacal, Allen, V. Jones, R. Lopez, Sherman, Swanson, Toth

0 nays

1 absent — Murr

**WITNESSES:** For — Clifton J Buchanan, AFSCME Texas Correctional Employees Council 907; John Litzler, Texas Baptists Christian Life Commission; Charlie Malouff, Renee Monoe, Texas C.U.R.E. Inc; Andrea Cedillo, Jessica Dickerson, Amite Domonick, Texas Prisons Community Advocates; Ray Hymel, Texas Public Employee Association; Charles Roberts; Michael Webber (*Registered, but did not testify*: Lauren Johnson, ACLU of Texas; Corinne Schnadelbach, Catholic Charities; Amanda Posson, Every Texan; Jennifer Toon, Lioness Justice Impacted Women’s Alliance; Luisa De Poo, Hannah Haddad, Roman Catholic Diocese of Austin; Maggie Luna, Statewide Leadership Council; Luis Soberon, Texas 2036; Ana Gonzalez, Texas AFL-CIO; Cole Meyer, Texas Appleseed; Jenny Andrews, Stephanie Wilson, Cody Wilson, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Justin Martinez, Cynthia Simmons, Texas Center for Justice and Equity; Jenny Hixon, Texas Civil Rights Project; Ann Bishop, Texas Public Employees Association; Mary Sue Molnar, Texas Voices; Ashley Ford, The Arc of Texas; Cynthia Van Maanen, Travis County Democratic Party; and 16 individuals

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jason Clark, Texas Department of Criminal Justice)

**BACKGROUND:** While local and county jails in Texas are required to maintain a facility climate between 65 and 85 degrees, state prison and jail facilities have no

such regulations. Some have suggested that holding the facilities operated under the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to the same standard as local and county jails would ensure the health and safety of all individuals who work at and are incarcerated within these facilities.

**DIGEST:** HB 1708 would require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to ensure that the temperature in each facility operated by the department was maintained between 65 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit. The department would not be required to comply with this requirement until September 1, 2024.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.

**NOTES:** According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$1,124,648,151 in general revenue related funds through the biennium ending August 31, 2025.