

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R2688 HLT-F

S.B. 698
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Criminal Justice
4/14/2007
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The current salary structure for parole officers in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division (division) is not competitive with salaries in other states or with the private sector. Such low salaries and the lack of a career ladder play a major role in the high turnover rate in the division, which in turn, affects its ability to fulfill its mission. Officers with fewer years of experience are paid as much as those with more experience because pay raises are unavailable after an officer has reached the Parole Officer II level until the officer moves into a supervisory position. The system does not take into account the accumulated experience and skill that officers gain each year on the job. These officers perform important protective and supervisory duties for Texas citizens, and as levels of experience among their ranks decline, public safety becomes an issue.

As proposed, S.B. 698 creates a career ladder for parole officers in the division in order to make their salaries more competitive with other states and the private sector.

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 508.1131, as follows:

Sec. 508.1131. SALARY CAREER LADDER FOR PAROLE OFFICERS. (a) Requires the executive director (director) of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to adopt a salary career ladder for parole officers (officers). Requires the salary career ladder (career ladder) to base an officer's salary on the officer's classification and years of service with TDCJ.

(b) Sets forth the classifications for which TDCJ is to classify officers for the purposes of the salary schedule.

(c) Entitles an officer to whom the schedule applies and who received an overall evaluation of at least satisfactory in the officer's last annual evaluation to annual salary increases during each of the officer's first 10 years of service in a particular classification. Sets forth the amount of the increases.

SECTION 2. Requires the director to adopt a career ladder as required by Section 508.1131, Government Code, as soon as practicable, but no later than 30 days after the effective date of this Act. Entitles all officers to whom the schedule applies and who received an overall evaluation of at least satisfactory in the officer's last annual evaluation to a salary in the amount that meets or exceeds the amount specified in the schedule for each particular officer beginning on the first day of the month following the date on which the career ladder is adopted.

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