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FACT SHEET

## **PROMOTE COMMUNITY RE-INTEGRATION**

**END THE UNFUNDED MANDATE COUNTIES HAVE GIVEN TO THE STATE IN SUPERVISING AND HOUSING THEIR RESIDENTS**

### **WHAT DOES H.B. 3654 DO?**

If in-prison substance abuse program graduates are required to participate in a continuum-of-care program, and the county to which they should be paroled does not have suitable facilities (transitional treatment centers, community residential facilities, or halfway houses), H.B. 3654 would require the parole panel to place them in another county, with the original county liable for all costs incurred for such placement. This liability would be incurred only for counties that failed to have operating facilities 24 months after the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) proposed such facilities in that county.

### **HOW ARE SOME COUNTIES DRAINING THE STATE'S BUDGET?**

Counties are failing to provide a housing infrastructure for former resident ex-offenders, unduly burdening the State. Individuals approved for parole but unable to be released back into their communities due to the unavailability of community facilities must remain under the supervision of TDCJ, forcing the State to absorb unnecessary costs for supervision. Currently, there are approximately 700 such inmates who remain incarcerated while on waitlists for community facility slots. At a cost of \$44 per inmate per day for incarceration, these inmates are costing the State nearly \$1 million per month.

### **RE-INTEGRATION IS CRUCIAL TO BOTH RETURNING EX-OFFENDERS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.**

A survey conducted by the Urban Institute found several dimensions of ex-offender/community interdependence:

- Ex-offenders who reported closer relationships with family members after release were less likely to use drugs and more likely to find work.
- 59% of surveyed ex-offenders were parents of minor children.
- 62% of surveyed ex-offenders owed child support or other debts.
- 51% of surveyed ex-offenders depended on their families for financial support.
- 80% of surveyed ex-offenders resided with their families after release.
- Nearly 1 in 5 ex-offenders sought employment from a former employer; most depended on interpersonal connections to find jobs.

### **H.B. 3654 BY REPRESENTATIVE RIDDLE WILL ENCOURAGE COUNTIES TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING TREATMENT FACILITIES FOR THEIR RESIDENTS.**

A “not-in-my-back-yard” approach to community-based treatment and supervision facilities has created a disproportionate burden among counties, with a few (usually urban, low-income) neighborhoods being forced to carry more than their share of these facilities.

County and city governments have used zoning laws and other tactics to block the operation or construction of these facilities, forcing TDCJ to contract with other counties to provide services that assist residents of the original county, essentially subsidizing what should be those counties' responsibilities.

Counties must accept those who must be re-integrated into society. If they are not willing to allow their placement into housing facilities in the neighborhoods or communities from which the individuals came, then they should have to cover re-entry infrastructure expenses incurred by creating and running comparable facilities elsewhere to meet Texas' public safety needs.

By allowing TDCJ to collect funds from counties that refuse to support community-based facilities in their districts, H.B. 3654 can end these counties' unwillingness to successfully re-integrate individuals back into their communities and encourage the development of community facilities in all neighborhoods where they are needed.