



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**SUBMITTED BY ANA YÁÑEZ-CORREA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
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**REGARDING HOUSE BILL 3736**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS**

**APRIL 11, 2007**

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Ana Yáñez-Correa. I am the Executive Director of the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to present testimony regarding House Bill 3736 by Representative McReynolds.

Now more than ever, tremendous demands are being put on parole resources. In order to avoid perpetuating a revolving door whereby inmates are released into the community only to return to prison shortly thereafter, Texas must tailor its parole system so that parole officers can provide offenders with the tools to aid them in their re-entry into society and better enable them to live responsible lives. The first step to be taken is to limit parole officer caseloads so that they may provide more improved and intense supervision of offenders that need it most.

### **WHAT DOES H.B. 3736 DO?**

House Bill 3736 would establish a maximum level for parole officer caseloads. The bill would require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to limit the caseload for each parole officer to the following:

- 60 active releasees, if the releasees are not in a specialized program described by Subdivisions (2)-(6);
- 35 active releasees, if the releasees are in the special needs offender program;
- 35 active releasees, if the releasees are in the therapeutic community substance abuse aftercare treatment program;
- 24 active releasees, if the releasees are in the sex offender program;
- 20 active releasees, if the releasees are electronically monitored; and
- 11 active releasees, if the releasees are in the super-intensive supervision program.

### **H.B. 3736 WILL ENSURE BETTER PUBLIC SAFETY AND PAROLEE ACCOUNTABILITY.**

Parole officers performing field operations must be able to focus more attention on high-risk parolees. H.B. 3736 would strengthen parole officers' effectiveness in promoting success by freeing up more resources for intense supervision of high-risk individuals during the critical early period of their sentences.

Furthermore, a reduction in caseloads will reduce the likeliness of a parolee absconding, since officers would be able to spend more time tracking and providing close supervision to individuals with a high flight risk, thereby increasing public safety by reducing these individuals' likelihood of recidivating.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before this committee, and to offer our organization's ideas about this important issue. I would also like to commend Rep. McReynolds for his efforts to make our criminal justice system more efficient and better equipped to keep our neighborhoods safe. We hope that this committee will approve his bill.