



TEXAS CRIMINAL
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FACT SHEET

REMOVE BARRIERS TO PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

FELONY LICENSING DISQUALIFICATIONS PREVENT QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS FROM

WHAT DOES THE BILL DO?

S.B. 1750 by Chairman Whitmire would allow for the provisional licensure of individuals convicted of non-violent, non-sex-related felonies. The bill would not allow crimes older than 5 years to count against an individual's eligibility for professional licenses, and it would allow those with a recent criminal history to be granted a 6-month temporary license on the condition that they not break laws or administrative rules and not become revoked from parole or probation. Successful completion of the provisionary period would result in the granting of a full license, while failure to comply would result in disqualification of the license.

RETURNING OFFENDERS NEED GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT IN ORDER TO REINTEGRATE AND TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Texas has 168 state laws that forbid felons from obtaining jobs. Texas law also designates 1,941 individual offenses as felonies, which results in a huge felon population in Texas. In fact, approximately 1 in 11 Texas adults has a felony conviction on his or her record. These people must find jobs and housing or else risk turning to illegal activity to survive.

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO A WIDE RANGE OF JOBS THAT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO QUALIFIED EX-OFFENDERS.

Licensing requirements apply to a significant number of occupation, including doctors, air conditioning and refrigeration contractors, talent agents, electricians, water well drillers, and many others.

This list is not complete, but it does reveal the array of options currently arbitrarily excluded from ex-offenders. By expanding the range of possible vocations, the state can encourage these individuals to support themselves by applying their particular skill sets, thereby reducing the likelihood that they will remain unemployed or return to crime.

S.B. 1750 WOULD ASSIST REFORMED INDIVIDUALS IN BECOMING CONTRIBUTORS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES.

By allowing ex-offenders to obtain provisional licenses for which they are otherwise qualified, the State can encourage personal responsibility. Furthermore, allowing these individuals to participate in a licensed occupation can be critical to some communities: In a case in Livingston, the town's only locksmith was unable to serve in that position due to a misdemeanor conviction over a decade old.

Texas must help returning offenders obtain gainful employment in order to facilitate their re-integration into our communities and allow them to take personal responsibility for their actions.