

By: West

S.B. No. 1848

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the provision of reentry, reintegration, and other services to a wrongfully imprisoned person who is discharged from a correctional facility.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 501, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 501.091 to read as follows:

Sec. 501.091. REENTRY AND REINTEGRATION SERVICES FOR WRONGFULLY IMPRISONED PERSONS. (a) In this section, "wrongfully imprisoned person" means a person who:

(1) has served wholly or partly a sentence in a facility operated by or under contract with the department; and

(2) has:

(A) received a pardon for innocence for the crime for which the person was sentenced; or

(B) otherwise been granted relief on the basis of actual innocence of the crime for which the person was sentenced.

(b) The department shall develop a comprehensive plan to ensure the successful reentry and reintegration of wrongfully imprisoned persons into the community following discharge from the department. The reentry and reintegration plan developed under this section must include:

(1) life-skills, job, and vocational training for a

wrongfully imprisoned person following discharge, for as long as those services are beneficial to the person;

(2) a requirement that the department provide, before a wrongfully imprisoned person is discharged from the department, the person with any documents that are necessary after discharge, including a state identification card; and

(3) the provision of financial assistance to aid a wrongfully imprisoned person in the reentry and reintegration process and in covering living expenses following discharge, in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

(c) The amount of financial assistance provided to a wrongfully imprisoned person under Subsection (b)(3) shall be deducted from:

(1) the amount of compensation provided to the person under Section 103.052, Civil Practice and Remedies Code; or

(2) any damages awarded to the person under Section 103.105 of that code.

(d) The department may contract with private vendors or other entities to implement the comprehensive reentry and reintegration plan required by this section.

SECTION 2. Chapter 614, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Section 614.021 to read as follows:

Sec. 614.021. SERVICES FOR WRONGFULLY IMPRISONED PERSONS.

(a) In this section, "wrongfully imprisoned person" has the meaning assigned by Section 501.091, Government Code.

(b) The office shall develop a plan for meeting the long-term treatment and rehabilitative needs of wrongfully

imprisoned persons who are discharged from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The plan must provide for:

(1) medical care and mental health services to be provided to a wrongfully imprisoned person at no cost to the person for the remainder of the person's lifetime;

(2) dental services to be provided to the person at no cost to a wrongfully imprisoned person for two years following the date of the person's discharge; and

(3) mental health and other health counseling services to be provided to a wrongfully imprisoned person at no cost to the person for three years following the date of the person's discharge.

(c) The office shall distribute to state agencies, political subdivisions, private organizations, and other qualified persons money appropriated by the legislature to be used for the development, operation, provision, and evaluation of medical, dental, and counseling services for wrongfully imprisoned persons under this section.

SECTION 3. (a) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall develop a comprehensive plan for the reentry and reintegration of wrongfully imprisoned persons as required by Section 501.091, Government Code, as added by this Act.

(b) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments shall develop a plan for meeting the long-term treatment and rehabilitative needs of wrongfully imprisoned

1 persons as required by Section 614.021, Health and Safety Code, as
2 added by this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
4 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
5 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
6 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
7 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.