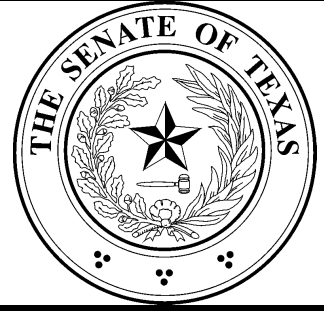


SENATOR  
**JOHN WHITMIRE**  
DISTRICT 15  
NEWS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Lara Wendler  
512/463-0115

*Whitmire Proposes New Model for Youth Offender Services*

**AUSTIN, Texas** -- State Senator John Whitmire (D-Houston) today announced his concept for a new model for the delivery of youth services to juvenile criminal offenders. Frustrated by the lack of reform at the Texas Youth Commission and the continued dismal performance and the unsafe housing facilities, he is calling for a complete revamping of the current structure of providing services to youth offenders.

"We have been trying to reform a system by throwing money at an infrastructure that is structurally unsound and outdated. It makes no sense to house troubled youth far away from their families and the professional resources they need to turn their lives around," stated Senator Whitmire.

"My intention is to ensure the money follows the offender," said Whitmire. "I have never anticipated an unfunded mandate, and, in fact, I would never allow it." Whitmire added, "I envision keeping the lower level offender in their community in safe, secure facilities whether run by the State or the counties." "We will also be considering some regional facilities in the rural areas of the state as well as a special high security facility for the most violent offenders."

"I have asked Richard Nedelkoff, the TYC Conservator, to use his juvenile justice expertise to help us think outside the concrete box and move our juvenile justice system into the 21st century," added Senator Whitmire. "We have to put politics aside and ignore the potential loss of some high paid jobs in Austin and focus on what is best for the kids and best for public safety."

"California is implementing major reform to decentralize its juvenile corrections system, along with Missouri, Mississippi and Louisiana. I cannot imagine Texas would be behind Louisiana and will not accept that for our kids," Whitmire commented.

"I am confident that with the great minds we have in this state we can work together to create a model juvenile justice program in Texas," Senator Whitmire concluded. "It is time for common sense and truth to govern how we provide these services to youth and turn them into productive citizens."

P.O. Box 12068, Austin, Texas 78711 (512) 463-0115  
803 Yale Street, Houston, Texas 77007 (713) 864-8701