

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1557  
By: Alonzo  
Homeland Security & Public Safety  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties note that emergencies are usually managed at the lowest jurisdictional level possible, and when local resources are depleted, help can be requested from the state and, if needed, from the federal government. The parties further note that one regional search and rescue team is controlled by the governor and the Texas Division of Emergency Management, while another regional search and rescue team is controlled by the City of Dallas. The parties contend that this creates a gap in organized regional search and rescue capabilities. C.S.H.B. 1557 seeks to provide for a uniform emergency response for the citizens of Texas, regardless of geographical area.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1557 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Division of Emergency Management of the Department of Public Safety to establish and operate, subject to the availability of funds, a search and rescue task force in each field response region established by the division to assist in search, rescue, and recovery efforts before, during, and after a natural or man-made disaster.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 1557 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

#### **INTRODUCED**

SECTION 1. Section 418.043, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### **HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE**

SECTION 1. Section 418.043, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 418.043. OTHER POWERS AND DUTIES.** The division shall:

- (1) determine requirements of the state and its political subdivisions for food, clothing, and other necessities in event of a disaster;
- (2) procure and position supplies, medicines, materials, and equipment;
- (3) adopt standards and requirements for local and interjurisdictional emergency management plans;
- (4) periodically review local and interjurisdictional emergency management plans;
- (5) coordinate deployment of mobile support units;
- (6) establish and operate training programs and programs of public information or assist political subdivisions and emergency management agencies to establish and operate the programs;
- (7) make surveys of public and private industries, resources, and facilities in the state that are necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter;
- (8) plan and make arrangements for the availability and use of any private facilities, services, and property and provide for payment for use under terms and conditions agreed on if the facilities are used and payment is necessary;
- (9) establish a register of persons with types of training and skills important in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery;
- (10) establish a register of mobile and construction equipment and temporary housing available for use in a disaster;
- (11) assist political subdivisions in developing plans for the humane evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of service animals and household pets in a disaster;
- (12) prepare, for issuance by the governor, executive orders and regulations necessary or appropriate in coping with disasters;
- (13) cooperate with the federal government and any public or private agency or entity in achieving any purpose of this chapter and in implementing programs for disaster mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery;
- (14) develop a plan to raise public awareness and expand the capability of the information and referral network under Section 531.0312;

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- (7) make surveys of public and private industries, resources, and facilities in the state that are necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter;
- (8) plan and make arrangements for the availability and use of any private facilities, services, and property and provide for payment for use under terms and conditions agreed on if the facilities are used and payment is necessary;
- (9) establish a register of persons with types of training and skills important in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery;
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- (13) cooperate with the federal government and any public or private agency or entity in achieving any purpose of this chapter and in implementing programs for disaster mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery;
- (14) develop a plan to raise public awareness and expand the capability of the information and referral network under Section 531.0312;

- (15) improve the integration of volunteer groups, including faith-based organizations, into emergency management plans;
- (16) cooperate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to create uniform guidelines for acceptable home repairs following disasters and promote public awareness of the guidelines;
- (17) cooperate with state agencies to:
  - (A) encourage the public to participate in volunteer emergency response teams and organizations that respond to disasters; and
  - (B) provide information on those programs in state disaster preparedness and educational materials and on Internet websites;
- (18) establish a liability awareness program for volunteers, including medical professionals;
- (19) define "individuals with special needs" in the context of a disaster;
- (20) establish and operate a search and rescue task force in each field response region established by the division to assist in search, rescue, and recovery efforts before, during, and after a natural or man-made disaster; and
- (21) [(20)] do other things necessary, incidental, or appropriate for the implementation of this chapter.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

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- (20) establish and operate, subject to the availability of funds, a search and rescue task force in each field response region established by the division to assist in search, rescue, and recovery efforts before, during, and after a natural or man-made disaster; and
- (21) [(20)] do other things necessary, incidental, or appropriate for the implementation of this chapter.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.