

By: Tinderholt

H.B. No. 1691

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the protection of religious freedoms and religious institutions during a declared state of disaster.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 418.0125 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.0125. LIMITATIONS ON EXECUTIVE ORDERS. The governor may not issue an executive order, proclamation, or regulation related to a declared state of disaster that:

(1) restricts the free exercise of religion protected under Chapter 110, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, or other state or federal law;

(2) prohibits or limits a religious service conducted in a house of worship by a religious organization established to support and serve the propagation of a sincerely held religious belief; or

(3) limits the operation or operational hours of a religious organization established to support and serve the propagation of a sincerely held religious belief.

SECTION 2. Section 418.108, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (j) to read as follows:

(j) The presiding officer of the governing body of a political subdivision may not issue an order or proclamation related to a declared local state of disaster that:

1 (1) restricts the free exercise of religion protected
2 under Chapter 110, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, or other state
3 or federal law;

4 (2) prohibits or limits a religious service conducted
5 in a house of worship by a religious organization established to
6 support and serve the propagation of a sincerely held religious
7 belief; or

8 (3) limits the operation or operational hours of a
9 religious organization established to support and serve the
10 propagation of a sincerely held religious belief.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.