

By: Lopez of Cameron

H.B. No. 77

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas border enforcement coordination program; making appropriations.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 421, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter G to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER G. TEXAS BORDER ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION PROGRAM

Sec. 421.101. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Border county" means a county that:

(A) borders the United Mexican States; or

(B) is adjacent to a county that borders the United Mexican States.

(2) "Texas Anti-Gang Center" means a Texas Anti-Gang Center that is wholly or partly funded through the office of the governor.

Sec. 421.102. BORDER COUNTY SHERIFFS' LIAISON AND TEXAS ANTI-GANG CENTERS' LIAISON. (a) The governor shall appoint the sheriff of a border county to serve as the border county sheriffs' liaison.

(b) The governor shall appoint the executive head of a Texas Anti-Gang Center to serve as the Texas Anti-Gang Centers' liaison.

(c) A liaison appointed under Subsection (a) or (b) serves a two-year term.

(d) A liaison appointed under Subsection (a) or (b) may

1 designate another individual to act as the liaison.

2 (e) Each liaison appointed under this section shall work
3 with each other and with the following individual and entities
4 regarding interagency coordination, communication, and cooperation
5 on border enforcement-related matters and activities:

6 (1) the Special Advisor to the Governor on Border
7 Matters;

8 (2) the Texas Department of Public Safety;

9 (3) the Texas Military Department; and

10 (4) the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

11 Sec. 421.103. INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM. Each
12 sheriff's department for a border county and each Texas Anti-Gang
13 Center shall, with money appropriated by the state, acquire the
14 technology necessary to implement, and shall implement, a
15 multimedia interoperable communication system that enables
16 real-time communication and sharing of information between:

17 (1) each sheriff's department for a border county;

18 (2) each Texas Anti-Gang Center;

19 (3) the Texas Department of Public Safety;

20 (4) the Texas Military Department; and

21 (5) the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

22 Sec. 421.104. TEXAS BORDER ENFORCEMENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.

23 (a) This section applies only to a sheriff's department for a
24 county that borders the United Mexican States.

25 (b) The sheriff of each county to which this section applies
26 shall establish and supervise in the county the Texas border
27 enforcement volunteer program.

1 (c) The sheriff shall appoint volunteers for the program to:

2 (1) assist the sheriff's department in monitoring the
3 portion of the Texas-Mexico border adjacent to the county;

4 (2) identify the unlawful entry of individuals or
5 objects at a location other than a port of entry; and

6 (3) communicate the location of the unlawful entry and
7 other information necessary to assist the sheriff's department in
8 arresting or detaining the individual or interdicting the object.

9 (d) The sheriff may not appoint an individual to be a
10 volunteer unless the individual:

11 (1) has been a resident of the county for at least the
12 four years preceding the date of appointment;

13 (2) has not been convicted of a felony;

14 (3) is at least 21 years of age; and

15 (4) is determined by the sheriff to be an individual of
16 upstanding moral character in the county.

17 (e) A volunteer may not arrest or detain an individual.

18 (f) A volunteer shall carry and display identification that
19 states the volunteer's name and that the volunteer has been
20 appointed as a volunteer for the program.

21 (g) A volunteer is not entitled to compensation for any act
22 performed in the course of the volunteer's duties under the
23 program.

24 (h) A sheriff's department may provide a volunteer with
25 equipment, including equipment that enables the volunteer to share
26 information through the interoperable communication system
27 implemented under Section 421.103.

1 SECTION 2. On the effective date of this Act:

2 (1) the amount of \$19,500,000 is appropriated from the
3 general revenue fund to the comptroller of public accounts for the
4 purpose of immediately distributing \$500,000 to each sheriff's
5 department for a border county as defined by Section 421.101,
6 Government Code, as added by this Act, and each Texas Anti-Gang
7 Center, as defined by that section, for the purposes described by
8 Section 421.103, Government Code, as added by this Act; and

9 (2) the amount of \$7,000,000 is appropriated from the
10 general revenue fund to the comptroller of public accounts for the
11 purpose of immediately distributing \$500,000 to each sheriff's
12 department for a county to which Section 421.104, Government Code,
13 as added by this Act, applies for the purposes described by that
14 section.

15 SECTION 3. Not later than March 1, 2024, the governor shall
16 appoint a border county sheriffs' liaison and a Texas Anti-Gang
17 Centers' liaison as required by Section 421.102, Government Code,
18 as added by this Act, to begin terms of office that begin on March 1,
19 2024.

20 SECTION 4. Not later than August 1, 2024, a sheriff's
21 department for a border county as defined by Section 421.101,
22 Government Code, as added by this Act, shall implement the
23 interoperable communication system as required by Section 421.103,
24 Government Code, as added by this Act.

25 SECTION 5. Not later than August 1, 2024, the sheriff for a
26 county to which Section 421.104, Government Code, as added by this
27 Act, applies shall establish the Texas border enforcement volunteer

1 program in that county as required by that section.

2 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the
3 last day of the legislative session.