

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 147
By: Bonnen
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In October of 2005, Governor Rick Perry appointed a 14 member Taskforce on Evacuation, Transportation and Logistics and tasked them with documenting the lessons learned from the Hurricane Rita evacuation; reinforcing the positive lessons; identifying key challenges; and making recommendations for how to improve evacuation plans and evacuation execution to better protect Texans in the event of future emergencies.

On February 14, 2006 the Taskforce issued their final report to the Governor which made a series of recommendations for improving this state's response to emergencies and outlined a series of planning requirements for improving the execution of evacuations during disasters.

The taskforce recommended that the Governor have the authority to order mandatory evacuations. The taskforce found that the nature of certain disasters that involve multiple jurisdictions and a large number of individuals requires a central authority to activate and coordinate the many assets and jurisdictions involved. The Governor's Division of Emergency Management has a centralized State Operations Center which brings together the state level emergency management personnel from all agencies and provides the optimal central authority for coordinating and managing a multi-jurisdictional evacuation. The taskforce found that if this kind of central authority had been in place, it could have resulted in improved outcomes.

The purpose of H. B. 147 is to authorize the Governor to issue a mandatory evacuation order.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: Amends Section 418.018(a) of the Government Code to allow the Governor to order an evacuation.

SECTION 2: Effective Date

EFFECTIVE DATE

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 on the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.