

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 88

By: Branch

Defense Affairs & State-Federal Relations
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was one of devastation and severe loss. Along with finding their homes demolished, many New Orleans' residents had to cope with the loss of their pets. The emotional attachment an owner feels towards their pet can be seen in a recent poll stating that 49% of home owners would refuse to leave dangerous areas if their pets were unable to accompany them. Considering the number of homes that contain pets, this issue is far-reaching and pertains to the many Americans. Federally, the United States Congress enacted legislation to grant funds to state and local agencies for "animal preparedness" projects.

The purpose of CSHB 88 is for the Emergency Management Council to assist political subdivisions in developing plans for humane evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of service animals and household pets in a disaster.

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

CSHB 88 amends the Government Code to require the Division of Emergency Management to assist political subdivisions in developing plans for the humane evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of service animals and household pets in a disaster.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

CSHB 88 requires the Division of Emergency Management to assist political subdivisions in developing plans for the humane evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of service animals and household pets in a disaster. The original bill required the division to coordinate the establishment of an identification system to enable the owner of a household pet who is separated from the pet during a disaster evacuation to locate and reclaim the pet. Further, the original bill established several requirements for plans developed under the bill.