

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 279
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, there is no centralized database for essential building information that can be accessed by first responders in the event of an emergency. This absence does not directly create a problem, but such a system could potentially lend itself to a more expeditious and efficient first response.

As proposed, S.B. 279 creates the statewide public building mapping information system for the purpose of storing specific parameters of information related to public buildings in an electronic format that will be readily accessible to first responders in the event of an emergency. The bill also provides for the system's administration, establishes an advisory committee to provide guidance and oversight, and provides for an exemption from public disclosure laws to protect critical infrastructure details of these buildings. Lastly, this bill authorizes and sets standards for participation in the system by state or local government agencies, and for voluntary participation by private entities.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Building and Procurement Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 2152.155, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 2152, Government Code, by adding Subchapter D, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. PUBLIC BUILDING MAPPING INFORMATION SYSTEM

Sec. 2152.151. DEFINITIONS. Defines "committee," "first responder," "maps and other information," "public agency," and "public building."

Sec. 2152.152. INFORMATION SYSTEM. (a) Requires the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC), with the advice of the Public Building Mapping Information System Committee (committee), to establish and operate a statewide public building mapping information system (system) to store information related to public buildings in an electronic format that will be readily accessible to first responders in the event of an emergency.

(b) Requires TBPC, with the advice of the committee, to develop a plan to create or obtain certain types of building-specific information to be stored in the system, subject to available funding. Sets forth the information to be included.

Sec. 2152.153. SOFTWARE STANDARDS AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS. Requires TBPC, with the advice of the committee, to develop software standards and format requirements for the creation and storage of certain information relating to public buildings to be input to the system. Authorizes TBPC to refuse any submitted maps or other information that does not meet these standards and requirements.

Sec. 2152.154. SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION. (a) Requires each public agency that creates or stores maps or other information related to a public building to submit such maps and information to TBPC for storage in the system.

(b) Authorizes a private entity that creates or stores maps and other information related to a public building to voluntarily provide that information to TBPC for storage in the system.

Sec. 2152.155. COMMITTEE. (a) Creates the committee as an advisory entity administered by TBPC.

(b) Authorizes TBPC to adopt rules as necessary for the operation of the committee.

(c) Sets forth the composition of the committee and the manner of appointing the members of the committee.

(d) Requires the committee to develop recommendations regarding the information required to be included in the system, software standards and format requirements, a plan to specify the order for creation and storage of maps and information based on availability of funding, the manner in which information in the system must be accessed, including detailed procedures and security systems, and training guidelines for use of the system.

Sec. 2152.156. AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION. Requires TBPC, with the advice of the committee, to develop procedures for the release of information within the system to first responders in the event of an emergency.

Sec. 2152.157. ACCESS TO INFORMATION. Provides that this subchapter does not apply to the extent that it interferes with the ability of a public agency to control and maintain access to information in an information system other than the public building mapping information system.

Sec. 2152.158. FUNDING. Requires TBPC to apply for federal funding available for purposes related to this subchapter. Requires TBPC to use any received grant to establish and maintain the system, and to administer grants to other public agencies to assist with the creation and storage of maps and other information.

Sec. 2152.159. EXCEPTION FROM PUBLIC INFORMATION LAW. Excepts information received and maintained by TBPC in the system from required disclosure under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

Sec. 2152.160. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMMUNITY. Provides that a local government and its employees are immune from civil liability for certain acts or omissions related to the system unless said act or omission was grossly negligent or done in bad faith.

SECTION 2. Provides that Subchapter D, Chapter 2152, Government Code, as added by this Act, does not require public agencies to create or store maps related to public buildings used by the agencies unless all related costs are provided by TBPC or another entity.

SECTION 3. Requires TBPC to develop software standards and format requirements not later than December 1, 2007. Provides that public agencies are exempt from complying with Section 2152.153, as added by this Act, until the standards and formats are created.

SECTION 4. Authorizes a local government that has created its own mapping system to continue to use that system until TBPC provides the funding necessary to modify the local government's information to meet TBPC-established standards and formats.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.