

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1499
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State Affairs
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

During the aftermath of Hurricane Rita, rules under Chapter 552 (Open Meetings), Government Code, prevented communities such as San Antonio from holding duly posted hearings to make decisions about the relocation of thousands of evacuees from the greater Houston area.

S.B. 1499 authorizes a governmental body that is expected to receive a large number of persons from the area of a declared disaster to post public meetings at least two hours prior to the meeting's scheduled time. This bill requires notice of such a meeting or an addendum to an agenda to be given to members of the news media at least one hour prior to the meeting.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 551.045, Government Code, by adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(e) Provides that, for purposes of Subsection (b)(2), the sudden relocation of a large number of residents from the area of a declared disaster to a governmental body's jurisdiction is considered a reasonably unforeseeable situation for which the governmental body is authorized to hold a meeting or to place a subject on a meeting's agenda without prior notice up to two hours before the beginning of the meeting for a reasonable period immediately following the relocation. Requires notice of an emergency meeting or supplemental notice of an emergency item added to the agenda of a meeting to address a situation described by this subsection to be given to members of the news media as provided by Section 551.047 (Special Notice to News Media of Emergency Meeting or Emergency Addition to Agenda), Government Code, not later than one hour before the meeting.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.