

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 15, 2007

TO: Honorable Judith Zaffirini, Chair, Senate Committee on S/C on Higher Education

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1493 by Bonnen (Relating to the establishment and operation of a severe storm research and planning center.), **As Engrossed**

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill. Because no funding amounts are specifically indicated in the bill and it is unknown what amounts the commission may request, the potential fiscal impact to the state is unknown.

The bill would add Chapter 155 to Subtitle H, Title 3 of the Education Code to require the creation of a severe storm research and planning center to facilitate research and develop plans, programs, and technology associated with the impact of and response to hurricanes and other severe storms in the Gulf Coast Region and adjacent areas. The regional planning commission, council of governments, or similar regional planning agency (commission) whose membership includes the most populous county that borders on the Gulf of Mexico or on a bay or inlet of the Gulf of Mexico would be responsible for establishing and administering the center.

The commission would be required to appoint an advisory committee, which must include various area universities, both public and private. To the extent funding would be available, the commission would be authorized to contract with Rice University for the purpose of operating, managing, and providing services or facilities for the center.

The commission would be authorized to receive state-appropriated funds for the purpose of supporting the activities of the center, and would be allowed to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations.

The bill would take effect immediately if it were to receive the required two-thirds vote in each house; otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

Local Government Impact

The Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments estimates implementing provisions of the bill would cost starting at \$45,394 in fiscal year 2008 and increasing up to \$53,104 by fiscal year 2012. Costs would be for one-half of a full-time-equivalent position (salary, indirect costs, and office items and supplies) to administer the center, support the required advisory committee, and coordinate with state, local, and private institutions.

Source Agencies: 781 Higher Education Coordinating Board

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