

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1511
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Insurance
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Residential fire sprinkler technology has been available to homeowners for installation in new home construction for many years, yet there has never been a strong market demand for these devices. In several parts of the country, as well as in certain Texas cities, local jurisdictions have enacted ordinances that make the installation of residential sprinkler systems mandatory, which can add thousands of dollars to the cost of a new home.

H.B. 1511 gives consumers who are contracting for the construction of a new one-family or two-family dwelling under 7,500 square feet in size the option of whether or not to install an automatic fire sprinkler system.

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

H.B. 1511 amends the Health and Safety Code to prohibit the enforcement of a state requirement or of an ordinance or order of a political subdivision that an automatic fire sprinkler system be installed in a new one-family or two-family dwelling under 7,500 square feet in size. The bill authorizes a prospective owner of a one-family or two-family dwelling under 7,500 square feet in size in a jurisdiction in which the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system would otherwise be required to choose whether or not to have the system installed and requires a builder in that jurisdiction, in a contract entered into on or after September 1, 2011, to offer this option to a person with whom the builder is contracting for the construction of a new one-family or two-family dwelling under 7,500 square feet in size.

H.B. 1511 excludes from its provisions a state requirement or an ordinance or order of a political subdivision adopted before January 1, 2009.

H.B. 1511 defines "builder" and "homeowner."

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.