

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1998
By: McCall
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, the state is not required to reimburse cities for the cost of opening and operating emergency shelters for evacuees following a state-recommended or state-ordered evacuation. Cities are eligible for reimbursement only when a federal disaster declaration is issued, and then only at 75 percent of eligible expenses. Under a federal disaster declaration, expenses such as straight-time salary for employees and the loss of revenue for public facilities are considered ineligible. Some cities report that the lack of a requirement for the state to reimburse emergency shelter costs to cities creates an unfair financial burden. Taxpayers of the affected political subdivision must bear the cost of providing shelter to evacuees without reimbursement or an expectation of reciprocity. Financial assistance is vital to the state's disaster management as it will help ensure that cities around the state that are unaffected by a disaster will provide emergency shelters for those affected.

H.B. 1998 requires the state to provide financial assistance to, and ultimately reimburse, cities that provide emergency shelters for persons from outside the host city in response to a state-ordered evacuation.

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. 1998 amends the Government Code to include emergency shelters with temporary housing in provisions relating to temporary housing provided by a political subdivision for disaster victims. The bill requires a political subdivision that is the locus of temporary housing or emergency shelters for persons moved or evacuated by the governor's recommendation or order to be assisted by any resource available to the state to ensure the political subdivision receives an advance or reimbursement of all expenses, including lost revenue, incurred by the political subdivision associated with the use of public facilities for temporary housing or emergency shelters, and of the amounts paid for salaries and benefits of permanently employed, straight-time and regular-time personnel of the political subdivision who perform duties associated with the movement or evacuation of persons into, out of, or through the political subdivision. The bill defines "public facility" as it relates to emergency management provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.