

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2827
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Intergovernmental Relations
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill is based on a recommendation by the House Select Committee on the Devastation of Hurricane Ike to the Texas Gulf Coast. The committee found that the state relied too heavily on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for housing solutions and that the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) had a lack of institutional knowledge when it came to emergency response.

This bill establishes a specific emergency housing division within TDHCA whose sole responsibility is to focus on the short-term and long-term housing needs of Texans who have suffered through natural disasters.

This bill provides TDHCA with the authority to create this new division internally and to use existing resources. TDHCA would collaborate with the Division of Emergency Management of the Office of the Governor, FEMA, local governments, and nonprofit agencies to establish a support network and a comprehensive emergency housing plan that can be rapidly activated and implemented.

This bill also gives the TDHCA the authority to appoint a committee composed of residents from the affected area to advise the TDHCA on how to allocate resources that may become available for the affected area.

H.B. 2827 relates to the establishment of the emergency housing and disaster recovery division within TDHCA.

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 2306.0521(c), Government Code, as follows:

(c) Requires the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), notwithstanding Subsection (a) (relating to authorizing the director of TDHCA, with the approval of the governing board to perform certain duties), to establish and maintain an emergency housing and disaster recovery division. Requires TDHCA to develop a program to provide for the rapid deployment of temporary housing for homeowners affected by natural disasters, develop a program to quickly restore or replace permanent housing for homeowners affected by natural disasters, develop a program to quickly provide additional rental housing to areas affected by natural disasters, provide funding to nonprofit agencies that provide to homeowners affected by natural disasters counseling on refinancing options and financial assistance available through state and federal programs, and collaborate with the division of emergency management established under Chapter 418 (Emergency Management) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to secure reimbursement for housing needs in areas affected by natural disasters.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 2306.056, Government Code, by adding Subsections (c) and (d), as follows:

(c) Authorizes the governing board of TDHCA, if federal or state money, other than money appropriated to TDHCA under a current services budget for the state fiscal biennium prepared for the state budgetary process is allocated to TDHCA to address the results of a natural disaster, to appoint a committee composed of residents of the affected area. Requires the committee to serve until 90 percent of the money allocated to TDHCA to address the results of the natural disaster has been spent. Requires the committee to advise TDHCA and the emergency housing and disaster recovery division with regards to resource allocation.

(d) Requires TDHCA to develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear periodically before a committee created under Subsection (c) and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the emergency housing and disaster recovery division.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2009.