

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2827
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Urban Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

One of the main housing recommendations of the House Select Committee on Hurricane Ike is the creation of an emergency housing division within the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Over the last several years, TDHCA has become one of the primary state agencies for addressing the emergency housing needs of residents displaced by hurricanes and other natural disasters. Currently, TDHCA lacks a specific division devoted to emergency housing preparation. As a result, the agency has been challenged in responding to the overwhelming and extraordinary needs of persons requiring emergency housing.

C.S.H.B. 2827 requires TDHCA to create an emergency housing and disaster recovery division. Among other provisions, the bill requires the division to collaborate with the division of emergency management established under state law and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to secure reimbursement for housing needs in areas affected by natural disasters.

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

C.S.H.B. 2827 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to establish and maintain an emergency housing and disaster recovery division. The bill requires the division 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 state law and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to secure reimbursement for housing needs in areas affected by natural disasters.

C.S.H.B. 2827 authorizes the board of directors 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. The bill 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. The bill requires the committee to advise TDHCA and the emergency housing and disaster recovery division with regards to resource allocation. The bill requires TDHCA to develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear periodically before the committee and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the emergency housing and disaster recovery division.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 2827 requires the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) to establish and maintain an emergency housing and disaster recovery division within TDHCA, whereas the original establishes the emergency housing division within TDHCA and the Emergency Housing Board as an independent entity within TDHCA to govern the division. The substitute removes all provisions in the original relating to the Emergency Housing Board. The substitute requires the division to develop programs to provide for the rapid deployment of temporary housing and to quickly restore or replace permanent housing, whereas the original requires the division to develop a program to restore housing to homeowners. The substitute requires the division to develop a program to quickly provide additional rental housing to areas affected by natural disasters, whereas the original does not specify a program that does this quickly. The substitute requires the division to provide funding to nonprofit agencies that provide counseling on refinancing options to homeowners affected by natural disasters, whereas the original does not specify that the homeowners counseled are to be those affected by natural disasters. The substitute requires the division to collaborate with the division of emergency management established under state law and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), whereas the original only requires the division to collaborate with FEMA.

C.S.H.B. 2827 adds a provision not in the original to authorize the board of TDHCA to appoint a committee composed of residents of the affected area to advise TDHCA and the emergency housing and disaster recovery division with regard to resource allocation if certain federal or state money is allocated to TDHCA to address the results of a natural disaster. The substitute requires TDHCA to develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear before that committee and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the division, whereas the original requires the Emergency Housing Board to develop and implement policies to allow the public to appear before the board and to speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the division.