

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R21185 KYF-D

H.B. 2758
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Higher Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties contend that accessible and immediate information is vital to the safety and security of students and staff in the event of an emergency on a college or university campus. Many colleges and universities have instituted various systems to alert students and staff of emergencies and other important notices. H.B. 2758 requires public and private institutions of higher education to establish an emergency alert notification system.

H.B. 2758 amends current law relating to mandatory emergency alert systems at institutions of higher education.

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 Subchapter E, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.218, as follows:

Sec. 51.218. EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM. (a) Defines, in this section, "institution of higher education" and "private or independent institution of higher education."

(b) Requires each institution of higher education and private or independent institution of higher education to establish an emergency alert system for the institution's students and staff, including faculty. Requires that the emergency alert system use e-mail or telephone notifications in addition to any other alert method the institution considers appropriate to provide timely notification of emergencies affecting the institution or its students and staff.

(c) Requires the institution, at the time a student initially enrolls or registers for courses or a staff member begins employment, to:

(1) obtain a personal telephone number or e-mail address from the student or staff member to be used to notify the individual in the event of an emergency; and

(2) register the student or staff member in the institution's emergency alert system.

(d) Authorizes a student or staff member to elect not to participate in an emergency alert system established under this section. Authorizes an election under this subsection to be submitted electronically or in writing, as chosen by the institution, and requires that the election be renewed at the start of each academic year.

(e) Provides that the personal identifying information obtained from an individual for the purpose of the emergency alert system of an institution of higher

education, including an e-mail address or telephone number, is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Section 552.021 (Availability of Public Information), Government Code.

(f) Requires each institution of higher education and private or independent institution of higher education to implement the emergency alert system required by this section not later than the spring 2012 semester. Provides that this subsection expires June 1, 2012.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2011.