

By: Pena

H.B. No. 2758

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to mandatory emergency alert systems at institutions of higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter E, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.218 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.218. EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM. (a) In this section, "institution of higher education" and "private or independent institution of higher education" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Each institution of higher education and private or independent institution of higher education shall establish an emergency alert system for the institution's students and staff, including faculty. The emergency alert system must 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) At the time a student initially enrolls or registers for courses or a staff member begins employment, the institution shall:

(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.

1 (d) A student or staff member may elect not to participate
2 in an emergency alert system established under this section. An
3 election under this subsection may be submitted electronically or
4 in writing, as chosen by the institution, and must be renewed at the
5 start of each academic year.

6 (e) The personal identifying information obtained from an
7 individual for the purpose of the emergency alert system of an
8 institution of higher education, including an e-mail address or
9 telephone number, is confidential and not subject to disclosure
10 under Section 552.021, Government Code.

11 (f) Each institution of higher education and private or
12 independent institution of higher education shall implement the
13 emergency alert system required by this section not later than the
14 spring 2012 semester. This subsection expires June 1, 2012.

15 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
16 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
17 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.