

AN ACT

relating to the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, as amended by S.B. No. 219, Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TASK FORCE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Sec. 81.401. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "task force" means the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response.

Sec. 81.402. PURPOSE AND FINDINGS. The legislature finds that:

(1) infectious diseases are responsible for more deaths worldwide than any other single cause;

(2) the State of Texas has a responsibility to safeguard and protect the health and well-being of its citizens from the spread of infectious diseases;

(3) on September 30, 2014, the first case of Ebola diagnosed in the United States occurred in Dallas, Texas;

(4) addressing infectious diseases requires the coordination and cooperation of multiple governmental entities at the local, state, and federal levels;

1           (5) public health and medical preparedness and  
2 response guidelines are crucial to protect the safety and welfare  
3 of our citizens; and

4           (6) Texas has nationally recognized infectious  
5 disease experts and other highly trained professionals across the  
6 state with the experience needed to minimize any potential risk to  
7 the people of Texas.

8           Sec. 81.403. TASK FORCE; DUTIES. (a) The Task Force on  
9 Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response is created as an  
10 advisory panel to the governor.

11           (b) The task force shall:

12           (1) provide expert, evidence-based assessments,  
13 protocols, and recommendations related to state responses to  
14 infectious diseases, including Ebola; and

15           (2) serve as a reliable and transparent source of  
16 information and education for Texas leadership and citizens.

17           Sec. 81.404. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS; TERMS. (a) The  
18 governor may appoint members of the task force as necessary,  
19 including members from relevant state agencies, members with  
20 expertise in infectious diseases and other issues involved in the  
21 prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, and members from  
22 institutions of higher education in this state. The governor shall  
23 appoint to the task force:

24           (1) at least one member who is a county judge of a  
25 county with a population of less than 100,000;

26           (2) at least one member who is a county judge of a  
27 county with a population of 100,000 or more;

1           (3) at least one member who is a representative of a  
2 local health authority serving a rural area;

3           (4) at least one member who is a representative of a  
4 local health authority serving an urban area;

5           (5) at least one member who is a licensed nurse; and

6           (6) at least one member who is emergency medical  
7 services personnel, as defined by Section 773.003.

8           (b) The governor shall appoint a director of the task force  
9 from among the members of the task force.

10          (c) The governor may fill any vacancy that occurs on the  
11 task force and may appoint additional members as needed.

12          (d) Members of the task force serve at the pleasure of the  
13 governor.

14          (e) A state or local employee appointed to the task force  
15 shall perform any duties required by the task force in addition to  
16 the regular duties of the employee.

17          Sec. 81.405. REPORTS. The task force may make written  
18 reports on its findings and recommendations, including legislative  
19 recommendations, to the governor and legislature.

20          Sec. 81.406. MEETINGS. (a) The task force shall meet at  
21 times and locations as determined by the director of the task force.

22          (b) The task force may meet telephonically in accordance  
23 with Section 551.125(b)(3), Government Code.

24          (c) The task force may hold public hearings to gather  
25 information. The task force shall endeavor to meet in various parts  
26 of the state to encourage local input.

27          (d) Notwithstanding Section 551.144, Government Code, or

1 any other law, the task force may hold a closed meeting to discuss  
2 matters that are confidential by state or federal law or to ensure  
3 public security or law enforcement needs. A closed meeting held as  
4 provided by this subsection must be held as otherwise provided by  
5 Chapter 551, Government Code.

6 Sec. 81.407. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. State agencies with  
7 members on the task force shall provide administrative support for  
8 the task force.

9 Sec. 81.408. REIMBURSEMENT. Task force members serve  
10 without compensation and are not entitled to reimbursement for  
11 travel expenses.

12 Sec. 81.409. INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS  
13 FACILITIES AT HEALTH CARE-RELATED INSTITUTIONS. (a) The commission  
14 may enter into contracts or agreements to assist in the  
15 establishment of infectious disease emergency preparedness  
16 facilities at health care-related institutions in this state. The  
17 contracts or agreements may provide for payment by the commission  
18 to develop and equip infectious disease emergency preparedness  
19 facilities at health care-related institutions in this state, as  
20 well as for materials, equipment, services, or other items the  
21 commission considers necessary to implement this section.

22 (b) This section expires September 1, 2017.

23 SECTION 2. (a) On the effective date of this Act, a member  
24 serving on the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and  
25 Response created by executive order of the governor continues to  
26 serve on the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and  
27 Response under Subchapter J, Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, as

1 added by this Act.

2 (b) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this  
3 Act, the governor shall make any appointments to the Task Force on  
4 Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response required under  
5 Subchapter J, Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, as added by this  
6 Act.

7 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
8 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
9 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
10 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
11 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2950 was passed by the House on May 13, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 142, Nays 3, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2950 on May 29, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 1, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2950 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 27, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Governor