

By: Klick

H.B. No. 2950

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

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, 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. TASK FORCE; DUTIES. (a) The Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response is created as an advisory board to the governor.

(b) The task force shall:

(1) provide expert, evidence-based assessments, protocols, and recommendations related to state responses to infectious diseases, including Ebola, and a strategic emergency management plan for state and local levels of government;

(2) develop a comprehensive plan to ensure that Texas is prepared for the potential of widespread outbreak of infectious diseases, such as the Ebola virus, and can provide rapid response that effectively protects the safety and well-being of citizens of this state;

1 (3) evaluate the supplies and resources available to
2 address an infectious disease outbreak; and

3 (4) serve as a reliable and transparent source of
4 information and education for Texas leadership and citizens.

5 (c) In developing the plan described by Subsection (b)(2),
6 the task force shall:

7 (1) use the significant expertise of medical
8 professionals in Texas and other states;

9 (2) collaborate with local government officials and
10 local health officials;

11 (3) use, as practicable, the Texas Emergency
12 Preparedness Plan and structure;

13 (4) identify various responses necessary in the event
14 of an epidemic of infectious disease;

15 (5) establish a command and control structure that
16 will ensure effective preparations and response if the governor
17 takes emergency action under Chapter 418, Government Code, or other
18 law; and

19 (6) coordinate with appropriate entities to ensure
20 public awareness and education regarding any pandemic threat.

21 Sec. 81.403. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS; TERMS. (a) The
22 governor may appoint members of the task force as necessary,
23 including members from relevant state agencies, members with
24 expertise in infectious diseases and other issues involved in the
25 prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, and members from
26 institutions of higher education in this state.

27 (b) The governor shall appoint a director of the task force

1 from among the members of the task force.

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

4 (d) Members of the task force serve at the pleasure of the
5 governor.

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

9 Sec. 81.404. REPORTS. (a) The task force shall report to
10 the governor, legislature, Texas Medical Board, and any relevant
11 medical associations as often as necessary to make recommendations
12 for updating protocols for addressing infectious diseases.

13 (b) The task force shall make written reports on its
14 findings and recommendations, including legislative
15 recommendations, to the governor and legislature on December 1 of
16 each even-numbered year.

17 Sec. 81.405. MEETINGS. (a) The task force shall meet at
18 times and locations as determined by the director of the task force.

19 (b) The task force may meet telephonically.

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

23 (d) The task force may meet in executive session to discuss
24 matters that are confidential by state or federal law or to ensure
25 public security or law enforcement needs.

26 Sec. 81.406. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. State agencies with
27 members on the task force shall provide administrative support for

1 the task force.

2 Sec. 81.407. REIMBURSEMENT. Task force members serve
3 without compensation and are not entitled to reimbursement for
4 travel expenses.

5 SECTION 2. On the effective date of this Act, a member
6 serving on the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and
7 Response created by executive order of the governor continues to
8 serve on the Task Force on Infectious Disease Preparedness and
9 Response under Subchapter J, Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, as
10 added by this Act.

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