By: King of Parker, Geren, Romero, Jr., Davis of Harris, Meyer, et al. H.B. No. 1526

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the provision of state death benefits to peace officers employed by certain private institutions of higher education located in this state.

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

SECTION 1. Section 615.003, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 615.003. APPLICABILITY. This chapter applies only to eligible survivors of the following individuals:

(1) an individual:

(A) elected, appointed, or employed as a peace officer by the state or a political subdivision of the state under Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure, or other law; or

(B) employed as a peace officer by a private institution of higher education, including a private junior college, that is located in this state under Section 51.212, Education Code;

(2) a paid probation officer appointed by the director of a community supervision and corrections department who has the duties set out in Section 76.002 and the qualifications set out in Section 76.005, or who was appointed in accordance with prior law;

(3) a parole officer employed by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice who has the duties set out in Section 508.001 and the qualifications set out in Section 508.113 or in prior law;

(4) a paid jailer;

(5) a member of an organized police reserve or auxiliary unit who regularly assists peace officers in enforcing criminal laws;

(6) a member of the class of employees of the correctional institutions division formally designated as custodial personnel under Section 615.006 by the Texas Board of Criminal Justice or its predecessor in function;

(7) a jailer or guard of a county jail who is appointed by the sheriff and who:

(A) performs a security, custodial, or supervisory function over the admittance, confinement, or discharge of prisoners; and

(B) is certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement;

(8) a juvenile correctional employee of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department;

(9) an employee of the Department of Aging and Disability Services or Department of State Health Services who:

(A) works at the department's maximum security unit; or

(B) performs on-site services for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;

(10) an individual who is employed by the state or a political or legal subdivision and is subject to certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection;

(11) an individual employed by the state or a

political or legal subdivision whose principal duties are aircraft crash and rescue fire fighting;

(12) a member of an organized volunteer fire-fighting unit that:

(A) renders fire-fighting services without remuneration; and

(B) conducts a minimum of two drills each month, each two hours long;

(13) an individual who:

(A) performs emergency medical services or operates an ambulance;

(B) is employed by a political subdivision of the state or is an emergency medical services volunteer as defined by Section 773.003, Health and Safety Code; and

(C) is qualified as an emergency care attendant or at a higher level of training under Section 773.046, 773.047, 773.048, 773.049, or 773.0495, Health and Safety Code;

(14) an individual who is employed or formally designated as a chaplain for:

(A) an organized volunteer fire-fighting unit or other fire department of this state or of a political subdivision of this state;

(B) a law enforcement agency of this state or of a political subdivision of this state; or

(C) the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;

(15) an individual who is employed by the state or a political subdivision of the state and who is considered by the

governmental employer to be a trainee for a position otherwise described by this section;

(16) an individual who is employed by the Department of Public Safety and, as certified by the director, is:

(A) deployed into the field in direct support of a law enforcement operation, including patrol, investigative, search and rescue, crime scene, on-site communications, or special operations; and

(B) given a special assignment in direct support of operations relating to organized crime, criminal interdiction, border security, counterterrorism, intelligence, traffic enforcement, emergency management, regulatory services, or special investigations; or

(17) an individual who is employed by the Parks and Wildlife Department and, as certified by the executive director of the Parks and Wildlife Department, is:

(A) deployed into the field in direct support of a law enforcement operation, including patrol, investigative, search and rescue, crime scene, on-site communications, or special operations; and

(B) given a special assignment in direct support of operations relating to organized crime, criminal interdiction, border security, counterterrorism, intelligence, traffic enforcement, emergency management, regulatory services, or special investigations.

SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act relating to the death of peace officers employed by certain private

institutions of higher education located in this state applies only in relation to a death that occurs on or after the effective date of this Act. Matters regarding eligibility, payment, and benefits under Chapter 615, Government Code, in relation to a death that occurs before the effective date of this Act are governed by the law in effect when the death occurs, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.