

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 981  
By: Kolkhorst  
Homeland Security & Public Safety  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

A U.S. Department of Agriculture program called D-SNAP provides food assistance to low-income households suffering food loss caused by a natural disaster and was first implemented by the state's Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) following Hurricane Harvey. A report issued by the Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas, established following Hurricane Harvey, recommended that the state improve the process for applying for D-SNAP benefits during a major disaster. S.B. 981 seeks to act on that recommendation by setting out certain requirements for HHSC relating to D-SNAP.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

S.B. 981 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), in collaboration with local government officials, to do the following:

- create a directory of local points of contact for the operation of the disaster supplemental nutrition assistance benefits program (D-SNAP) for victims of a disaster as authorized by federal law;
- determine the best method for communication between HHSC and local government officials regarding D-SNAP; and
- evaluate, develop, and maintain a list of potential sites for in-person application for D-SNAP benefits that meet federal requirements.

S.B. 981 requires HHSC to also do the following:

- enter into memorandums of understanding with local government agencies documenting the roles and responsibilities of HHSC and each local government agency regarding the determination of the need for and the location of sites for in-person application for D-SNAP benefits; and
- provide information regarding D-SNAP and strategies for effective collaboration between local governments and HHSC to local government officials in coastal counties by hosting webinars, conducting conference calls, or holding in-person meetings.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.