

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 982
By: Kolkhorst
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised about the lack of awareness regarding health care service programs available during a disaster or emergency. Furthermore, it has been noted that some local emergency shelters are not properly equipped to care for certain medically needy populations, such as those whose medical needs are technology-dependent. S.B. 982 seeks to address these issues and improve awareness of and access to these programs during a disaster or emergency.

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. 982 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), in consultation with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and local governmental entities that have established emergency management plans, to develop a plan to increase the capabilities of local emergency shelters in the provision of shelter and care for specialty care populations during a disaster. The bill requires TDEM, in consultation with DSHS, to increase awareness of and encourage local government emergency response teams to utilize services provided by local volunteer networks, including the Medical Reserve Corps, that are available in the area to respond during a disaster or emergency. The bill requires TDEM to develop a plan to create and manage state-controlled volunteer mobile medical units in each public health region to assist counties that lack access to a local volunteer network. The bill establishes that TDEM is required to implement a provision of the bill only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose and if not, that TDEM may, but is not required to, implement a provision of the bill using other appropriations available for that purpose.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.