

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1764
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Transportation
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

During a critical situation, it can take response personnel hours and sometimes days to locate next of kin using emergency contact information. This can waste valuable time for law enforcement and delays notification of families that their loved ones are either injured or deceased.

Currently the Transportation Code requires that an application for an original, renewal, or duplicate driver's license or personal identification certificate from the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas (DPS) be designed to allow, but not require, the applicant to provide emergency contact information, medical information, and describe the confidential nature of the information. By updating their emergency contact information, Texans would increase the chances of next of kin being contacted more rapidly during an emergency and save public resources.

S.B. 1764 would authorize and clarify that driver's license and identification card holders may voluntarily add, amend, or delete emergency contact information by submitting an electronic form at any time on DPS's website. This would provide local and state law enforcement and emergency personnel with a frontline tool to locate emergency contacts in critical situations.

In 2005, Florida passed an analogous To Inform Families First program, and Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, and Ohio have implemented similar programs due to Florida's success. Specifically, since the program was established, approximately 14,779,378 Floridians have updated their information. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 1764 amends current law relating to emergency contact and medical information maintained by the Department of Public Safety.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 521.060(e), Transportation Code, as follows:

(e) Requires the forms and procedures established and maintained under Subsection (d) (relating to a requirement of the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas (DPS) to establish and maintain a certain manner by which a holder of a driver's license or personal identification certificate may provide emergency contact or medical information to DPS or amend previously provided information) to:

(1) creates this subdivision from existing text and makes a nonsubstantive change; and

(2) allow the holder of a driver's license or personal identification certificate or an authorized agent of the holder to add, amend, or delete information described by Subsection (d) by submitting an electronic form on DPS's Internet website.

SECTION 2. Requires DPS, not later than January 1, 2020, to produce and make available on DPS's Internet website an electronic form in accordance with Section 521.060(e), Transportation Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2019.