86R8342 AAF-D

By:  Bucy H.B. No. 1433

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the authority of a municipal utility district to restrict sex offenders from child safety zones in the district; creating an offense.

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

SECTION 1.  Subchapter D, Chapter 54, Water Code, is amended by adding Section 54.244 to read as follows:

Sec. 54.244.  LIMITATIONS ON REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS IN DISTRICT. (a) In this section:

(1)  "Child safety zone" means premises where children commonly gather. The term includes a school, day-care facility, playground, public or private youth center, public swimming pool, video arcade facility, or other facility that regularly holds events primarily for children. The term does not include a church, as defined by Section 544.251, Insurance Code.

(2)  "Playground," "premises," "school," "video arcade facility," and "youth center" have the meanings assigned by Section 481.134, Health and Safety Code.

(3)  "Registered sex offender" means an individual who is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure.

(b)  To provide for the public safety, the board of a district by rule may restrict a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone in the district.

(c)  A person who violates a rule adopted by a district under this section commits an offense. An offense under this subsection is a Class C misdemeanor.

(d)  It is an affirmative defense to prosecution of an offense under the rule that the registered sex offender was in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone for a legitimate purpose, including transportation of a child that the registered sex offender is legally permitted to be with, transportation to and from work, and other work-related purposes.

(e)  The rule may establish a distance requirement described by Subsection (b) at any distance of not more than 1,000 feet.

(f)  The rule must establish procedures for a registered sex offender to apply for an exemption from the rule.

(g)  The rule must exempt a registered sex offender who established residency in a residence located within the specified distance of a child safety zone before the date the rule is adopted. The exemption must apply only to:

(1)  areas necessary for the registered sex offender to have access to and to live in the residence; and

(2)  the period the registered sex offender maintains residency in the residence.

(h)  A district that adopts a rule under this section shall install signs indicating the child safety zone. The signs must be installed at regular intervals at the distance specified under Subsection (e).

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2019.