

1-1 By: Paul, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Taylor) H.B. No. 2320
 1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 11, 2019;
 1-3 April 17, 2019, read first time and referred to Committee on
 1-4 Business & Commerce; May 10, 2019, reported favorably by the
 1-5 following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; May 10, 2019, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	X			
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15			X	
1-16	X			

1-17 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
 1-18 AN ACT

1-19 relating to services provided during and following a disaster.
 1-20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:
 1-21 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, is
 1-22 amended by adding Sections 418.054, 418.055, and 418.056 to read as
 1-23 follows:
 1-24 Sec. 418.054. COMMUNICATIONS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A
 1-25 DISASTER. The division, in collaboration with other appropriate
 1-26 entities selected by the division, shall to the extent practicable
 1-27 include private wireless communication, Internet, and cable
 1-28 service providers in the disaster planning process and determine
 1-29 the availability of the providers' portable satellite
 1-30 communications equipment and portable mobile telephone towers to
 1-31 assist in response and recovery immediately following disasters.
 1-32 Sec. 418.055. HARDENING OF UTILITY FACILITIES AND CRITICAL
 1-33 INFRASTRUCTURE. (a) In this section, "critical infrastructure"
 1-34 includes hospitals and fire stations.
 1-35 (b) The division shall identify methods for hardening
 1-36 utility facilities and critical infrastructure in order to maintain
 1-37 operations of essential services during disasters.
 1-38 (c) The division shall, in collaboration with the Texas
 1-39 Commission on Environmental Quality, the Railroad Commission of
 1-40 Texas, and any other state agencies selected by the division:
 1-41 (1) determine methods for effectively reducing risks
 1-42 and impacts on utility facilities and critical infrastructure from
 1-43 a disaster; and
 1-44 (2) encourage public and private entities that are
 1-45 responsible for utility facilities and critical infrastructure to
 1-46 implement the methods determined under Subdivision (1).
 1-47 (d) This section does not apply to a utility facility owned
 1-48 or controlled by a utility regulated by the Public Utility
 1-49 Commission of Texas.
 1-50 Sec. 418.056. REPORT ON BUILDING TRADE SERVICES FOLLOWING
 1-51 DISASTERS. (a) Not later than November 1, 2020, the division shall
 1-52 submit a report to members of the legislature on improving the
 1-53 oversight, accountability, and availability of building trade
 1-54 services following disasters. The report must include:
 1-55 (1) strategies to increase the availability of
 1-56 tradespeople, including plumbers and electricians, following a
 1-57 disaster;
 1-58 (2) approaches to increase prosecutions of alleged
 1-59 fraud related to building trade services offered following a
 1-60 disaster; and
 1-61 (3) methods to encourage performance bond

2-1 requirements in contracts for building trade services to be
2-2 performed following a disaster.

2-3 (b) The division shall consult with the Texas Department of
2-4 Licensing and Regulation and any other state agencies selected by
2-5 the division, local governments, trade associations, and law
2-6 enforcement groups in preparing the report described by Subsection
2-7 (a).

2-8 (c) This section expires January 1, 2021.

2-9 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 17, Utilities Code, is
2-10 amended by adding Section 17.010 to read as follows:

2-11 Sec. 17.010. DISASTER BILLING AWARENESS. The commission in
2-12 cooperation with the Texas Division of Emergency Management shall:

2-13 (1) promote public awareness of bill payment
2-14 assistance available during a disaster for electric, water, and
2-15 wastewater services, including assistance for consumers on level
2-16 billing plans; and

2-17 (2) provide the public with information about billing
2-18 practices during a disaster to ensure that consumers of electric,
2-19 water, and wastewater services have an adequate understanding of
2-20 their rights.

2-21 SECTION 3. Not later than December 1, 2019, the Texas
2-22 Division of Emergency Management and the Public Utility Commission
2-23 of Texas shall begin the public awareness campaign required by
2-24 Section 17.010, Utilities Code, as added by this Act.

2-25 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

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