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H.B. No. 2325

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to providing information and communication regarding and during a disaster.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Sections 418.054, 418.055, 418.056, 418.057, 418.058, and 418.059 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.054. COORDINATING 9-1-1 TEXT MESSAGE CAPABILITY.

The division, in consultation with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, shall coordinate state and local government efforts to make 9-1-1 emergency service capable of receiving text messages from a cellular telephone or other wireless communication device.

Sec. 418.055. SOCIAL MEDIA USE DURING AND AFTER DISASTERS.

The division, in consultation with any state agency or private entity the division determines is appropriate, shall develop standards for the use of social media as a communication tool by governmental entities during and after a disaster. The standards must:

(1) require state agencies, political subdivisions, first responders, and volunteers that use social media during and after a disaster to post consistent and clear information;

(2) optimize the effectiveness of social media use during and after a disaster; and

(3) require that certain official social media

1 accounts be used during and after a disaster only for providing  
2 credible sources of information.

3 Sec. 418.056. DISASTER MOBILE APPLICATION. (a) The  
4 division shall develop a mobile application for wireless  
5 communication devices to communicate critical information during a  
6 disaster directly to disaster victims and first responders.

7 (b) The mobile application may provide information on:

8 (1) road and weather conditions during a disaster; and

9 (2) disaster response and recovery activities.

10 Sec. 418.057. DISASTER WEB PORTAL. The division shall  
11 develop a comprehensive disaster web portal. The web portal must:

12 (1) provide disaster information to the public,  
13 including information on programs and services available to  
14 disaster victims and funding for and expenditures of disaster  
15 assistance programs;

16 (2) include information on disaster response and  
17 recovery activities; and

18 (3) provide information on obtaining assistance from  
19 the Federal Emergency Management Agency, state agencies, organized  
20 volunteer groups, and any other entities providing disaster  
21 assistance.

22 Sec. 418.058. USE OF DATA ANALYTICS IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT.

23 To the extent feasible, the division shall use data analytics  
24 software to integrate data from federal, state, local, and  
25 nongovernmental sources to more effectively manage disaster  
26 response and recovery.

27 Sec. 418.059. STUDY ON STANDARD COMMUNICATION FORMAT. (a)

1 To improve the state's response to disasters, the division shall  
2 conduct a study on the use of a standard communication format by  
3 first responders to create a common interoperable operating  
4 framework during a disaster. The study must:

5 (1) examine the costs and benefits of promoting the  
6 use of a standard communication format to create a comprehensive  
7 common operating framework that is interoperable across networks;

8 (2) identify any costs that first responders may incur  
9 in acquiring equipment complying with a standard communication  
10 format; and

11 (3) identify necessary actions to adopt a standard  
12 communication format.

13 (b) Not later than September 1, 2020, the division shall  
14 submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, and members of the  
15 legislature a report on the findings of the study.

16 (c) This section expires December 1, 2020.

17 SECTION 2. Subchapter F, Chapter 418, Government Code, is  
18 amended by adding Section 418.127 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 418.127. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMUNITY OUTREACH. To  
20 the extent practicable, the following entities shall conduct  
21 community outreach, including public awareness campaigns, and  
22 education activities on disaster preparedness each year:

23 (1) municipalities and counties;

24 (2) the department, including the division;

25 (3) the Texas Education Agency;

26 (4) the office of the comptroller;

27 (5) the Texas Department of Insurance;

- 1           (6) the Texas Department of Transportation;
- 2           (7) the Texas Department of Housing and Community
- 3 Affairs;
- 4           (8) the Health and Human Services Commission; and
- 5           (9) the Department of State Health Services.

6           SECTION 3. Subchapter H, Chapter 418, Government Code, is  
7 amended by adding Section 418.193 to read as follows:

8           Sec. 418.193. LOCAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE REGISTRY PLANS.

9           (a) In this section, "emergency assistance registry" means the  
10 registry maintained by the division that provides local emergency  
11 planners and emergency responders with additional information on  
12 the needs of certain individuals in their communities.

13           (b) An emergency management director described by Section  
14 418.1015 shall develop a plan to use information from the emergency  
15 assistance registry during the political subdivision's response to  
16 a disaster. The emergency management director shall publish the  
17 plan on:

- 18           (1) the political subdivision's Internet website; and
  - 19           (2) the department's Internet website in accordance
- 20 with Subsection (c).

21           (c) The division shall develop a process by which a plan  
22 developed by an emergency management director under Subsection (b)  
23 may be published to the department's Internet website. The  
24 division shall establish a designated area on the department's  
25 Internet website for the public to view the plan.

26           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.