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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BY: Raymond

FLOOR AMENDMENT NO. _____

Amend S.B. 1

Department of State Health Services
Proposed Funding and Rider
Border Laboratory Capacity

Prepared by LBB Staff, 03/09/2021

Overview

Add funding and a new rider at the Department of State Health Services to direct funds to the City of Laredo's Health Department for the purpose of improving border laboratory capacity to receive a Laboratory Response Network certification.

Rapid Laboratory Detection along the Texas/Mexico Border is paramount for early detection and intervention, disease control. This is especially critical for new and emerging diseases such as COVID-19. Rapid Laboratory Detection is part of the health and bio-security response. Currently the laboratory capacity is not certified by the Texas Department of State Health Services to serve as a Laboratory Response Network (LRN) lab to detect bioterrorism agents, emerging and novel public health threats and emergencies and other public health threats.

Laredo has a biosafety laboratory level III (BSL III) that was built in partnership with DSHS with the intent of becoming an LRN to enhance laboratory capacity on the Texas/Mexico Border. This would enhance the response to current and new biological threats. This certification will also facilitate Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) approval to reduce the risk of foodborne threats.

Required Action

- 1) On page II-XX of the Department of State Health Services' bill pattern, increase appropriations in Strategy A.4.1, Laboratory Services, by \$500,000 in General Revenue Funds in fiscal year 2022 and in fiscal year 2023.
- 2) On page II-XX of the Department of State Health Services bill pattern, add the following rider:

_____. **Border Laboratory Capacity.** Out of the amounts appropriated above in Strategy A.4.1, Laboratory Services, the Department of State Health Services shall transfer \$X in each fiscal year of the biennium out of General Revenue Funds to the City of Laredo's Health Department for the purpose of improving laboratory capacity to receive a Laboratory Response Network certification.