

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1345
By: Leach
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

State employees who are certified disaster service volunteers of the American Red Cross or who are in training to become a member of the American Red Cross are granted leave without deduction in salary or loss of vacation time, sick leave, earned overtime credit, or state compensatory time during the event of a disaster to serve as a volunteer. Yet American Red Cross volunteers are only a small proportion of the disaster volunteers providing valuable emergency response to communities across Texas. The Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) includes a vast array of disaster relief organizations whose volunteers' efforts during an emergency are not exempted from the loss of salary or benefits. H.B. 1345 seeks to extend leave provisions similar to those for American Red Cross volunteers to each state employee who is a volunteer for a Texas VOAD member organization.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1345 repeals Government Code provisions providing for paid leave for state employees in the executive or judicial branch who are, or are in training to become, certified disaster service volunteers specifically with the American Red Cross. The bill amends the Government Code to grant instead to a state employee in the executive or judicial branch who is a volunteer of any organization that is a member of the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster up to 10 days of paid leave per fiscal year to participate in disaster relief services if the following conditions are met:

- the employee's supervisor authorizes the leave; and
- the services in which the employee participates are provided for a state of disaster declared by the governor.

H.B. 1345 repeals Section 661.907, Government Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.