

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
87R11038 CJM-D

H.C.R. 46  
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Administration  
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Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Every year, countless Texans flock to beaches to enjoy the sunshine, sand, and waves, but it is important for visitors to be aware of the potential dangers that can arise from swimming in the ocean. Rip currents are powerful, narrow channels of fast-moving water that flow outward to sea. These currents have an average speed of around one to two feet per second, but some can be as fast as eight feet per second. Many swimmers are caught off guard by the sensation of being pulled out to sea and react by attempting to swim directly to shore, putting themselves at risk of exhaustion and drowning.

Signs that a rip current may be present include a break in the wave pattern, a visible channel of choppy, churning water, a line of foam or debris moving seaward, and a difference in water color. If a swimmer is caught in a rip current, he or she should swim parallel to, rather than against the force of the current, until it is weak enough that the swimmer can head to shore. If he or she is unable to escape that way, it is best to float or tread water and signal for help. It is imperative that swimmers remain calm and try to conserve their energy.

Beach visitors should be mindful of the flag warning system, which is used to signal hazardous conditions in the water, such as strong currents, high bacteria levels, and jellyfish or other marine life; visitors can also receive daily updates on the beach conditions from the National Weather Service. Recognizing and being prepared for rip currents and other hazards can save lives, and it is important that Texans take the time to educate themselves about these dangers to ensure that they have a safe, healthy, and enjoyable beach vacation.

### **RESOLVED**

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate April as Beach Safety and Rip Current Awareness Month.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.004(d), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.