

By: Martinez Fischer

H.B. No. 4393

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to disaster relief and recovery.

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the Texas Rescue Plan.

SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Labor Code, is amended by adding Subchapter I to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER I. UNEMPLOYMENT DURING STATE OF DISASTER

Sec. 201.201 REQUIREMENTS DURING STATE OF DISASTER. (a)

During a disaster declared by the governor under Chapter 418, Government Code, or by the president of the United States, or a public health disaster declared under Chapter 81, Health and Safety Code, the commission shall waive the following requirements:

(1) work requirements that require a recipient of unemployment compensation benefits to search for work; and

(2) waiting week requirements.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the funds received by the State of Texas from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, the sum of \$215 million to the Texas Workforce Commission to supplement benefits under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program by an additional \$100 per week for eligible beneficiaries through September 6, 2021.

SECTION 4. Chapter 302, Labor Code, is amended by adding Section 302.00436 to read as follows:

Sec. 302.00436. SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE PROGRAM DURING A

1 STATE OF DISASTER. (a) During a disaster declared by the governor
2 under Chapter 418, Government Code, or by the president of the
3 United States, or a public health disaster declared under Chapter
4 81, Health and Safety Code, the commission shall waive:

5 (1) requirements that require a parent to work or
6 attend a job training or educational program in order to be eligible
7 for the subsidy; and

8 (2) 60 day reapplication waiting periods if the
9 parent's eligibility or the child's enrollment is terminated.

10 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the funds received
11 by the State of Texas from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021,
12 Public Law 117-2, the sum of \$200 million to the Texas Workforce
13 Commission to be used to supplement child-care subsidies for
14 COVID-19 essential workers as defined by Executive Order GA 14,
15 issued March 31, 2020.

16 SECTION 6. Section 151.3565, Tax Code, is amended to read as
17 follows:

18 Sec. 151.3565. EMERGENCY PREPARATION SUPPLIES FOR LIMITED
19 PERIOD. (a) The sale of an emergency preparation item is exempted
20 from the taxes imposed by this chapter if the sale takes place
21 during a period beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the Saturday before the
22 last Monday in April and ending at 12 midnight on the last Monday in
23 April.

24 (b) For purposes of this section, "emergency preparation
25 item" means:

26 (1) a portable generator used to provide light or
27 communications or to preserve perishable food in the event of a

1 power outage, the sales price of which is less than \$3,000;

2 (2) an item listed in this subdivision, the sales
3 price of which is less than \$300:

4 (A) a storm protection device manufactured,
5 rated, and marketed specifically to prevent damage to a glazed or
6 non-glazed opening during a storm; or

7 (B) an emergency or rescue ladder; or

8 (3) an item listed in this subdivision, the sales
9 price of which is less than \$75:

10 (A) a reusable or artificial ice product;

11 (B) a portable, self-powered light source;

12 (C) a gasoline or diesel fuel container;

13 (D) a AAA cell, AA cell, C cell, D cell, 6 volt,
14 or 9 volt battery, or a package containing more than one battery,
15 other than an automobile or boat battery;

16 (E) a nonelectric cooler or ice chest for food
17 storage;

18 (F) a tarpaulin or other flexible waterproof
19 sheeting;

20 (G) a ground anchor system or tie-down kit;

21 (H) a mobile telephone battery or battery
22 charger;

23 (I) a portable self-powered radio, including a
24 two-way radio or weatherband radio;

25 (J) a fire extinguisher, smoke detector, or
26 carbon monoxide detector;

27 (K) a hatchet or axe;

- 1 (L) a self-contained first aid kit[~~,-or~~]
- 2 (M) a nonelectric can opener[~~-~~];
- 3 (N) disinfectant cleaning supplies; or
- 4 (O) personal protective equipment.

5 SECTION 7. In addition to other amounts appropriated to the
6 Public Utilities Commission of Texas for the state fiscal biennium
7 beginning September 1, 2021, there is appropriated out of the funds
8 received by the State of Texas from the American Rescue Plan Act of
9 2021, Public Law 117-2, the sum of \$1 billion to the Public
10 Utilities Commission to establish a winter storm relief program to
11 provide low-income individuals with funds for to pay for home
12 repairs, winterization, exorbitant electricity bills, and other
13 costs incurred as a result of Winter Storm Uri. The commission
14 shall by rule establish the program, including the allocation
15 formula, eligibility requirements, the manner in which an
16 individual may apply for assistance, and procedures for awarding
17 assistance.

18 SECTION 8. Chapter 121, Health and Safety Code, is amended
19 by adding Section 121.0067 to read as follows:

20 Sec. 121.0067 GRANTS FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE MONITORING.

21 (a) Subject to the availability of funds, the department shall
22 administer a program under which funds may be granted to counties,
23 municipalities, public health districts, regional advisory
24 councils, and other political subdivisions for use by the counties,
25 municipalities, public health districts, regional advisory
26 councils, and other political subdivisions to provide or pay for
27 infectious disease monitoring.

1 (b) The executive commissioner shall adopt rules governing:

2 (1) the allocation formula for grants awarded under
3 this section;

4 (2) the manner in which a municipality, county, public
5 health district, regional advisory councils, or other political
6 subdivision applies for a grant;

7 (3) the procedures for awarding grants; and

8 (4) the minimum infectious disease monitoring
9 services to be provided under the grant and other standards
10 applicable to the services to be provided under the grant.

11 SECTION 9. Section 418.047, Texas Government Code, is
12 amended by adding subsection (e) to read as follows:

13 Sec. 418.047. COMMUNICATIONS. (a) In cooperation with
14 other state agencies, the division shall ascertain what means exist
15 for rapid and efficient communication in times of disaster.

16 (a-1) The division shall coordinate with the Texas
17 Department of Transportation to establish additional methods for
18 disseminating emergency public service messages to motorists,
19 including:

20 (1) severe weather advisories;

21 (2) AMBER alerts under Subchapter L, Chapter 411; and

22 (3) silver alerts under Subchapter M, Chapter 411.

23 (b) The division shall consider the desirability of
24 supplementing the communication resources or integrating them into
25 a state or state-federal telecommunication or other communication
26 system or network.

27 (c) In studying the character and feasibility of any system

1 or its parts, the division shall evaluate the possibility of its
2 multipurpose use for general state and local governmental purposes.

3 (d) The division shall make recommendations to the governor
4 as appropriate.

5 (e) If federal funds are allocated to the state for the
6 purpose of providing disaster relief, the division shall develop an
7 Internet website to house information on how the federal funds have
8 been allocated by the governor.

9 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect immediately if it
10 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each
11 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.
12 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate
13 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.