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| BILL ANALYSIS |

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| H.B. 570 |
| By: Raymond |
| Homeland Security & Public Safety |
| Committee Report (Unamended) |

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| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE** According to America's Preparedness Report Card, Texas is expected to have the nation's worst wildfire threat by 2050. Fire departments, especially under-resourced departments and those subject to increasing budgetary constraints, need to be equipped to handle the projected increases in wildfires. A report from the federal Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency indicates that urban areas are especially vulnerable in instances of extreme drought, which can cause extensive infrastructure damage. Without proper planning and resources, the state will not be prepared for these events. Furthermore, most of Texas has warmed between one-half and one degree in the past century. In the eastern two-thirds of the state, average annual rainfall is increasing, yet the soil is becoming drier. These facts, which come from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, point to the critical need for the potential effects of these issues to be studied comprehensively at the state level, which will allow state and local agencies to collaborate on planning and mitigation efforts. H.B. 570 seeks to direct the Texas Division of Emergency Management to conduct a statewide study assessing the future impacts and costs of drought and wildfires, along with recommendations for planning and mitigation efforts. |
| **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. 570 requires the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to conduct a study regarding the potential effects of droughts and wildfires in Texas over the next 50 years. The bill requires the study to include an assessment of the following:* the projected ecological effects of droughts and wildfires;
* the projected effects of droughts on the temperature in urban areas;
* the projected economic effects of droughts and wildfires;
* vulnerabilities to droughts and wildfires;
* the availability of local resources to combat wildfires and adapt to droughts; and
* potential mitigation strategies for reducing the risk of and damage caused by droughts and wildfires.

The bill sets out a list of entities from which TDEM must solicit and consider information in conducting the study. The bill requires TDEM, not later than March 1, 2024, to submit a written report that includes a summary of the study and any legislative recommendations based on the study to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, each standing legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over TDEM, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Agriculture, the Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. These provisions expire January 1, 2025. |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE** On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023. |