

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3322
By: Goodwin
Agriculture & Livestock
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to Feeding Texas, one in eight Texans experiences food insecurity. Texas is also one of nine states above the national average when it comes to food insecurity, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. C.S.H.B. 3322 seeks to address this issue by establishing an office of food system security and resiliency within the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). The office will serve multiple purposes, including helping coordinate and facilitate cooperation among food access and industry professionals and working to maximize the reach and efficacy of pre-existing food security and access programs. Establishing such an office was a recommendation of the Texas Food Access Study released in late December 2022 by TDA.

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

C.S.H.B. 3322 amends the Agriculture Code to establish the office of food system security and resiliency as a division within the Department of Agriculture. The bill makes the office responsible for food system security and resiliency in Texas, including the following:

- coordinating state resources and programs so food access industry professionals can efficiently use resources to meet the needs of Texas;
- ensuring a food system in Texas that is free of disruption;
- promoting the growth, manufacture, and processing of agricultural products in Texas for farm-to-store and farm-to-table consumption;
- developing regional food system security and resiliency planning by working with other state agencies, counties, municipalities, school districts, and local governments; and
- promoting policies to establish more localized food markets or food access points through measures such as connecting retailers, distributors, municipalities, counties, school districts, and other local governments to local producers and collaborating with local stakeholders to expand food access across Texas.

C.S.H.B. 3322 requires the office, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, to make legislative recommendations to the legislature that may improve food system security and resiliency in Texas. If the Texas food system security and resiliency planning council is established by an Act of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, the office must manage the council and coordinate with the council to promote policies to establish more localized food markets or food access points.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3322 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

While both the introduced and substitute establish the responsibilities of the office, the substitute includes among those responsibilities promoting policies to establish more localized food markets or food access points through certain measures, which the introduced did not include among those responsibilities.

While both the introduced and substitute require the office to manage the Texas food system security and resiliency planning council, if it is established by an Act of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, the substitute includes a requirement absent from the introduced for the office to coordinate with the council to promote policies to establish more localized food markets or food access points.