

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1158
By: Whitmire
Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The major events reimbursement program (MERP) is one of three funds constituting the Event Trust Funds program in the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office within the governor's office. These funds were created to assist Texas communities by offsetting the direct costs related to preparing for or conducting an event and to further the state's mission of marketing Texas as a premier tourist destination. After an applicable event, and after the state accepts a prepared economic impact analysis, a small portion of taxes from the designated market area is sent back to the local community to cover eligible expenses. Texas has the fortune of winning two spots to host matches for the 2026 Men's World Cup. Years ago, when the World Cup was added to the list of eligible events under the MERP, it was not anticipated that more than one city in Texas would be awarded the ability to host World Cup matches for the same tournament, so current statute only allows one endorsing municipality to apply for MERP reimbursement. S.B. 1158 seeks to address this issue by clarifying that each series of World Cup games held in a market area designated for that series is considered a separate, single event for purposes of funding eligibility.

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

S.B. 1158 amends the Government Code to classify each series of games for the World Cup soccer tournament held in a market area designated for that series as a separate, single event for the purposes of eligibility for funding under the major events reimbursement program.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.