

By: Bonnen

H.B. No. 18

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the authority of the comptroller to provide funding for the deployment and operation of certain emergency communication systems.

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

SECTION 1. Section 403.653(c), Government Code, as effective September 1, 2025, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The fund may be used only for:

- (1) a purpose described by Chapter 490I;
- (2) providing funding for 9-1-1 and next generation 9-1-1 services under Chapter 771, Health and Safety Code;
- (3) supporting the deployment of next generation 9-1-1 service, including its costs of equipment, operations, and administration, as provided by Section 771.0713, Health and Safety Code;
- (4) supporting the Texas Broadband Pole Replacement Program established under Section 403.553 [~~403.503, as added by Chapter 659 (H.B. 1505), Acts of the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021~~];
- (5) providing matching funds for federal money provided for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program;
- (6) expanding access to broadband service in economically distressed communities to support increased connectivity needs in those areas; [~~and~~]

1 (7) supporting the deployment and operation,
2 including by funding costs for equipment, operation, and
3 administration, of:

4 (A) early warning and emergency systems to
5 provide notifications of natural disasters and other emergencies;
6 and

7 (B) interoperable emergency radio systems; and

8 (8) administering and enforcing this subchapter.

9 SECTION 2. Section [490I.0106](#)(d), Government Code, as
10 amended by S.B. No. 1405, Acts of the 89th Legislature, Regular
11 Session, 2025, is amended to read as follows:

12 (d) In making an award under this section, the ~~[The]~~ office
13 may not:

14 (1) except as provided by Section [490I.01062](#), favor a
15 particular broadband technology in awarding contracts, grants,
16 loans, or other financial incentives;

17 (2) award a contract, grant, loan, or other financial
18 incentive for the deployment of last-mile broadband service to a
19 noncommercial provider of broadband service for a broadband
20 serviceable location if an eligible commercial provider of
21 broadband service has submitted an application for the same
22 location;

23 (3) take into consideration distributions from the
24 state universal service fund established under Section [56.021](#),
25 Utilities Code, when deciding to award contracts, grants, loans, or
26 other financial incentives; or

27 (4) except as provided by Section [490I.01061](#), award a

1 contract, grant, loan, or other financial incentive for deployment
2 of last-mile broadband service for a location that is subject to an
3 existing federal commitment to deploy qualifying broadband service
4 on the date the application is submitted or during the application
5 process.

6 SECTION 3. Chapter 490I, Government Code, is amended by
7 adding Section 490I.01063 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 490I.01063. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS PROGRAM.

9 (a) The broadband development office may award contracts, grants,
10 low-interest loans, and other financial incentives to support the
11 deployment and operation of:

12 (1) early warning and emergency systems to provide
13 notifications of natural disasters and other emergencies; and

14 (2) interoperable emergency radio systems.

15 (b) In implementing this section, the office may coordinate
16 with the office of the governor to support the governor's
17 interoperable radio communications program established under
18 Subchapter F, Chapter 421.

19 (c) An award granted under this section does not affect the
20 eligibility of a telecommunications provider to receive support
21 from the state universal service fund under Section 56.021,
22 Utilities Code.

23 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the
24 last day of the legislative session.