

By: Gervin-Hawkins

H.B. No. 185

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to first responder broadband network services used by first responders during natural disasters and other emergencies.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 411, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter N-1 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N-1. FIRST RESPONDER BROADBAND NETWORK SERVICE

Sec. 411.411. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "First responder" has the meaning assigned by Section 161.0001, Health and Safety Code.

(2) "First responder broadband network service" means a dedicated wireless broadband communications network specifically designed for use by first responders responding to natural disasters or other emergencies.

Sec. 411.412. SELECTION OF SERVICE PROVIDER FOR DEPARTMENT FIRST RESPONDERS. (a) The department shall select and procure from a provider a first responder broadband network service for use by first responders who are department employees. The first responder broadband network service selected by the department for department employees must have service availability in all areas of the state, including those areas in which flooding or other natural disasters are most likely to occur.

(b) In the event that a department employee is terminated by or otherwise separates from employment with the department, the

1 department shall inform the first responder broadband network  
2 service provider of that fact and require the provider to cancel  
3 that employee's access to the service.

4 Sec. 411.413. ASSISTANCE TO OTHER FIRST RESPONDERS. (a)  
5 The department may assist first responders who are not department  
6 employees to select and secure a first responder broadband network  
7 service or to renew a first responder broadband network service  
8 previously secured by the first responders.

9 (b) For purposes of Subsection (a), the department shall  
10 maintain a database that lists the first responder broadband  
11 network service providers in this state. The database must include  
12 information that demonstrates the service area of each provider, as  
13 well as the average broadband network service availability of the  
14 system offered by the provider at each location within the  
15 provider's service area.

16 Sec. 411.414. ANNUAL REPORT. Not later than December 1 of  
17 each year, the department shall prepare and submit to the  
18 lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives,  
19 and each other member of the legislature an annual report that  
20 includes:

21 (1) an evaluation of the effectiveness of first  
22 responder broadband network services, the total cost of these  
23 services to the state, and the current method of paying those costs;

24 (2) data on the outcomes, including failures and  
25 successes, of first responder broadband network services during  
26 natural disasters and other emergencies that require use of the  
27 first responder broadband network services;

1           (3) data on use of first responder broadband network  
2 services, including the name of the provider of the service and the  
3 number of first responders using the service offered by each  
4 provider; and

5           (4) recommendations for improving emergency and first  
6 responder communication operability and interoperability,  
7 increasing the resilience of first responder broadband network  
8 services, and enhancing resource capabilities.

9           SECTION 2. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the  
10 last day of the legislative session.