

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 254
By: Ashby
Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the 89th Regular Session, the Texas Legislature created the rural infrastructure disaster recovery program to provide grants to rebuild and repair critical infrastructure damaged by a disaster for counties with a population of less than 100,000, a GDP of less than \$2 billion, and a poverty rate greater than 15 percent. The bill author has informed the committee that, following the July 4th floods in the Texas Hill Country, officials from Kerrville in need of additional state aid have called for changes to the program's eligibility criteria in order to make additional political subdivisions located in the affected area eligible for grants under the program. H.B. 254 seeks to address this issue by revising the economic eligibility criteria for grants under the rural infrastructure disaster recovery program.

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. 254 amends the Government Code, as effective September 1, 2025, to revise the eligibility of a county to apply to the Texas Division of Emergency Management for a grant under the rural infrastructure disaster recovery program by increasing the county GDP threshold from less than \$2 billion to less than \$3 billion and decreasing the county poverty rate threshold from greater than 15 percent to greater than 10 percent. Accordingly, the bill makes a political subdivision of the state other than a county that is wholly or partly located in such an eligible county eligible to apply for such a grant.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.