

By: Gervin-Hawkins

H.B. No. 61

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the development of a statewide real-time emergency communications platform.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 418.0475 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.0475. STATEWIDE REAL-TIME EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM. (a) In this section, "platform" means the statewide real-time emergency communications platform developed under Subsection (b) to support communications between governmental agencies and other agencies before, during, and after a natural disaster or other emergency.

(b) The division shall develop and maintain a statewide real-time emergency communications platform to ensure that governmental agencies and other agencies that respond to disasters throughout this state have access to a communications platform:

(1) capable of rapid and efficient communication in times of disaster; and

(2) dedicated to facilitating interagency communication regarding disaster preparedness and response.

(c) The platform must:

(1) integrate and provide for mapping, alerts, data tracking, resource requests and management, and other capabilities as the division determines advisable;

1 (2) be accessible to emergency management personnel at
2 state, regional, and local agencies, the first responders of those
3 agencies, and other first responders as determined by the division;

4 (3) be interoperable with existing state and federal
5 emergency management communication systems and networks; and

6 (4) use plain language and follow standards
7 established by this state and the federal government for use of
8 terminology in emergency management.

9 (d) The division shall incorporate the platform into the
10 comprehensive state emergency management plan prepared under
11 Section 418.042 as an appropriate means of communication and each
12 local and interjurisdictional agency shall incorporate the
13 platform into the emergency management plan prepared for its area
14 under Section 418.106 as an appropriate means of communication.

15 (e) The division shall grant the following entities access
16 to the platform:

- 17 (1) the Commission on State Emergency Communications;
18 (2) the General Land Office;
19 (3) the Public Utility Commission of Texas;
20 (4) the Railroad Commission of Texas;
21 (5) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
22 (6) the Department of State Health Services;
23 (7) the Texas Department of Transportation;
24 (8) the Department of Public Safety of the State of
25 Texas;
26 (9) the Health and Human Services Commission;
27 (10) other state agencies with the duty to prepare for

1 or respond to disasters as determined by the division;

2 (11) each municipality;

3 (12) each county;

4 (13) any other political subdivision with the duty to
5 prepare for or respond to disasters, as determined by the division;

6 (14) members of the Texas Interoperable
7 Communications Coalition;

8 (15) each trauma service area regional advisory
9 council; and

10 (16) any other entity the division determines
11 appropriate.

12 (f) The division may collaborate with any state agency as
13 appropriate to develop and maintain the platform.

14 (g) Agencies described by Subsection (e) may use any funds
15 available to cover the costs of using the platform, including for
16 communication, information sharing, and resource requests and
17 management.

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