

By: Bettencourt, et al.
(Wilson)

S.B. No. 3

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to outdoor warning sirens in flash flood-prone areas.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 418, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 418.027 to read as follows:

Sec. 418.027. GRANT PROGRAM FOR REQUIRED OUTDOOR WARNING SIRENS. (a) Using any money available for that purpose, the office of the governor shall establish and administer a grant program to assist municipalities, counties, and other governmental entities with covering the costs of installing outdoor warning sirens required under Section 16.502, Water Code.

(b) The office of the governor shall establish:

(1) eligibility criteria for grant applicants;
(2) grant application procedures;
(3) guidelines relating to grant amounts;
(4) procedures for evaluating grant applications; and
(5) procedures for monitoring the use of a grant awarded under the program and ensuring compliance with any conditions of a grant.

(c) The governor may delegate to a state agency the authority to administer the grant program established under this section.

SECTION 2. Chapter 16, Water Code, is amended by adding Subchapter M to read as follows:

1 SUBCHAPTER M. OUTDOOR WARNING SIRENS

2 Sec. 16.501. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

3 (1) "Flash flood-prone area" means an area of this
4 state included in the disaster declaration issued by the governor
5 under Section 418.014, Government Code, in response to the July
6 2025 Hill Country floods.

7 (2) "Outdoor warning siren" means a system that
8 produces a sound designed to alert a person who is outdoors of an
9 imminent disaster and encourage that person to immediately seek
10 shelter or move to higher ground and includes sensors, gauges, and
11 all other components essential to the function of the system.

12 Sec. 16.502. OUTDOOR WARNING SIRENS REQUIRED IN FLASH
13 FLOOD-PRONE AREAS. (a) The board shall identify each area in a
14 flash flood-prone area that:

15 (1) has a history of consistent or severe flooding;
16 and

17 (2) based on the history under Subdivision (1) and any
18 other factor the board considers relevant, warrants the
19 installation, maintenance, and operation of one or more outdoor
20 warning sirens.

21 (b) Other relevant factors the board may consider in making
22 determinations under Subsection (a)(2) include, as to each area:

23 (1) loss of human life to flooding;

24 (2) the existence of residences or other dwelling
25 structures in a flash flood-prone area; and

26 (3) the potential damage to real or personal property
27 resulting from a flood.

1 (c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), for each area
2 identified under Subsection (a)(2), the appropriate municipality
3 or county shall install, maintain, and operate one or more outdoor
4 warning sirens in accordance with the rules adopted by the board
5 under this section. If the site of the installation is:

6 (1) in the boundaries of a municipality, the
7 municipality shall install, maintain, and operate the siren; or

8 (2) in the unincorporated area of a county, the county
9 shall install, maintain, and operate the siren.

10 (d) An outdoor warning siren is not required for an area in
11 which a governmental entity already maintains and operates an
12 outdoor warning siren that meets the best management practices and
13 guidance adopted by board rule.

14 (e) Municipalities, counties, and other governmental
15 entities by written agreement may jointly install, maintain, or
16 operate an outdoor warning siren required under this section.

17 (f) Each county or municipality with an outdoor warning
18 siren required under this section or any other governmental entity
19 with an outdoor warning siren in a flash flood-prone area shall
20 regularly test the functionality of the outdoor warning siren and
21 document the results of those tests.

22 (g) The board's identification under this section of an area
23 that warrants an outdoor warning siren is final and binding.

24 (h) The board shall adopt rules and procedures to implement
25 this section, including facilitating development of best
26 management practices and guidance:

27 (1) for the operation of an outdoor warning siren in a

1 flash flood-prone area of this state; and

2 (2) for an outdoor warning siren installed,
3 maintained, or operated in a flash flood-prone area, including
4 guidance that an outdoor warning siren be equipped with a backup
5 power source that is different from the siren's primary power
6 source.

7 (i) The board may contract or consult with other entities
8 when adopting rules and procedures to implement this section.

9 (j) The board may not provide financial assistance, other
10 than financial assistance described by Section 418.027, Government
11 Code, to a county or municipality during any period that the county
12 or municipality is not in compliance with this section, as
13 determined by the board.

14 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
15 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
16 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
17 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
18 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the last day of the
19 legislative session.