

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1592
By: Plesa
Agriculture & Livestock
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that the timely distribution of agricultural information is essential to protect the agricultural industry and citizens from emerging threats like pests and diseases and that currently, Texas does not disseminate this information quickly enough, leaving the economy and environment vulnerable to consequences as a result. The bill author has also informed the committee that while the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Animal Health Commission, and Texas Department of Agriculture play a key role in identifying and managing these threats, the current mechanisms for sharing this information are often fragmented or delayed. H.B. 1592 seeks to provide a solution to address gaps in communication within the state's agricultural response system by establishing an opt-in internet based alert system through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, ensuring that business, growers, retailers, and citizens receive timely and critical updates on emerging wildlife and plant pests, diseases, and quarantine and enabling a more efficient, prepared response to agricultural threats.

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. 1592 amends the Education Code to require the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, with the cooperation of the Department of Agriculture (TDA), the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), and the Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), to develop and implement a statewide Internet-based alert system for notifications related to wildlife and plant pests, diseases, and quarantines. The alert system must issue notifications for the following:

- a confirmed case of a dangerous plant or wildlife pest or disease;
- the establishment, modification, or removal of a pest or disease quarantine order; and
- any compliance agreements entered into with TDA related to a pest or disease quarantine.

The bill requires the alert system to issue notifications through email and provide for enrollment in the alert system for delivery of a system notification. The bill requires the extension service to enter into a memorandum of understanding with TDA, the TAHC, and TPWD to ensure the extension service is able to issue a required notification within 72 hours of an applicable action by those agencies.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.