

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R4154 MCF-D

H.B. 1646
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Local Government
5/21/2025
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Emergency service districts (ESDs) in Texas are local government entities that provide emergency services such as fire, medical, and rescue services and operate under a governing board that typically oversees the budget, purchases, and expenditures of the ESD. Currently, the cap on the amount of an expenditure that an ESD employee may make without board approval is set at \$2,000. With regular costs on the rise, as the bill author has informed the committee, this limit can create a burden for ESDs in using time and funds efficiently and increasing the limit would allow for more streamlined operations and potentially quicker decision-making on emergency purchases, while still maintaining oversight for significant financial decisions. For example, in committee hearing, a representative from the Bexar County ESD Association testified about the difficulties this current limit places on emergency personnel, stating that it causes adverse emergency response effects including slowing the delivery of needed equipment and hindering the capacity of emergency services.

H.B. 1646 seeks to address this issue by raising the current cap on the amount of an expenditure that may be paid by an emergency services district employee without board approval from \$2,000 to \$50,000.

H.B. 1646 amends current law relating to the amount of an expenditure that may be paid by an emergency services district employee without board approval.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 775.073(b), Health and Safety Code, to prohibit an expenditure of more than \$50,000, rather than \$2,000, from being paid unless the expenditure is presented to the board of emergency services commissioners (board) and the board approves the expenditure.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2025.