

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R3855 CS-D

H.B. 2128
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Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Rural communities often face more challenges in maintaining sufficient firefighting and technical rescue services compared to their urban counterparts, due to limited funding, shortages of trained personnel, and lack of access to affordable training. To help ensure the state has the data necessary to develop policies supporting rural emergency response efforts, H.B. 2128 requires the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service to conduct a study to evaluate the disparities between rural and urban firefighting and technical rescue service capabilities and provide recommendations for improvement.

H.B. 2128 requires the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service to conduct a study of rural firefighting and technical rescue service capabilities and compare those capabilities with those of urban municipalities. The bill requires the study to consider disparities in the following factors:

- available funding for personnel and equipment;
- the number of qualified candidates to fill new or vacant firefighting and rescue personnel positions;
- opportunities for affordable training for firefighting and rescue personnel; and
- any other factor the extension service considers relevant.

The bill requires the extension service, not later than December 1, 2026, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and then speaker of the house of representatives a report that includes the findings of the study and any recommendations based on the study.

H.B. 2128 amends current law relating to a study of rural firefighting and technical rescue service capabilities.

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. STUDY ON RURAL FIREFIGHTING AND TECHNICAL RESCUE SERVICE CAPABILITIES. (a) Defines "service."

(b) Requires the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (service) to conduct a study of rural firefighting and technical rescue service capabilities and compare those capabilities with those of urban municipalities. Requires that the study consider disparities in available funding for personnel and equipment, the number of qualified candidates to fill new or vacant firefighting and rescue personnel positions, opportunities for affordable training for firefighting and rescue personnel, and any other factor the service considers relevant.

SECTION 2. REPORT. Requires the service, not later than December 1, 2026, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives a report that includes the findings of the study and any recommendations based on the study.

SECTION 3. EXPIRATION. Provides that this Act expires September 1, 2027.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE: Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.