

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3000  
By: King  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The bill author has informed the committee that rural communities in Texas often face significant challenges in providing reliable and timely emergency medical services (EMS) and that many of these counties operate on limited budgets and lack the financial resources to purchase or upgrade ambulances. Long distances from trauma centers and low population density further strain local EMS systems, which may place residents at risk during medical emergencies. H.B. 3000 seeks to strengthen emergency response capabilities and ensure equitable access to lifesaving care in under-served regions of Texas by requiring the comptroller of public accounts to establish and administer the rural ambulance service grant program to support the stated purpose of ensuring adequate ground ambulance services by providing financial assistance to qualified rural ambulance service providers in qualified counties in Texas with a population of 68,750 or less.

### **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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the comptroller of public accounts in SECTION 1 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3000 amends the Local Government Code to require the comptroller of public accounts, not later than January 1, 2026, to establish and administer the rural ambulance service grant program to support the state purpose of ensuring adequate ground ambulance services by providing financial assistance to qualified rural ambulance service providers in qualified counties. The bill defines "qualified county" as a county that has a population of 68,750 or less and "qualified rural ambulance service provider" as a private entity or public agency, as those terms are defined by Health and Safety Code provisions governing local administration of emergency communications, licensed by the Department of State Health Services to provide emergency medical services and operating predominantly in a rural area.

H.B. 3000 authorizes a qualified county to submit a grant application to the comptroller not later than the 30th day after the first day of the county's fiscal year and limits the authorized frequency of that submission to only one application each fiscal year. The bill makes a county that is awarded a grant under the bill's provisions ineligible to apply for an additional grant.

H.B. 3000 authorizes the comptroller to award a grant under the program to a qualified county using money appropriated to the comptroller for that purpose and only in accordance with a contract between the comptroller and the county that includes conditions providing the

comptroller with sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of providing adequate ground ambulance services is accomplished. The bill requires the comptroller, in awarding grants, to consider the distance from a qualified county's county seat to the nearest Level I trauma facility and the county's ability to otherwise obtain the money necessary to provide adequate ground ambulance services. The bill caps the amount of an awarded grant at \$500,000 for a county with a population of less than 10,000 and at \$350,000 for a county with a population between 10,000 and 68,750.

H.B. 3000 authorizes a qualified county awarded a grant under the program to use or authorize the use of the grant money only to purchase ambulances as provided by comptroller rule and prohibits such a county from reducing the budget of the qualified rural ambulance service provider for the county's next fiscal year following the fiscal year of the grant award.

H.B. 3000 authorizes the comptroller to disburse a program grant award to a qualified county before the county places an order for an ambulance and requires the county to purchase and take possession of an ambulance with money awarded under the grant program not later than the fifth anniversary of the date the county receives the money. The bill requires the comptroller, not later than January 1, 2026, to adopt rules necessary to implement the bill's provisions, including rules to establish the following:

- a standardized application process, the form to apply for a grant, and the manner of submitting the form;
- deadlines for applying for a grant, disbursing grant money, and spending grant money;
- procedures for monitoring the disbursement of grant money to ensure compliance with the bill's provisions and for requiring the return of grant money awarded if a county fails to use the money for a purpose authorized by the bill; and
- the type of ground ambulance vehicles that may be purchased with grant money.

H.B. 3000 authorizes a qualified county to apply for a rural ambulance service grant on or after January 1, 2026.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2025.