

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1931
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Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, there have been calls to provide veterinarians, licensed veterinary technicians, and certified veterinary assistants who volunteer during natural or man-made disasters with additional protections from frivolous lawsuits. H.B. 1931 seeks to address these calls by providing immunity from civil liability to such professionals under certain circumstances.

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. 1931 amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to grant immunity from civil liability to a certified veterinary assistant, licensed veterinary technician, or licensed veterinarian who in good faith and as a volunteer provides medical assistance to an injured animal for an act or omission that occurs in providing the assistance if it is provided:

- in response to a man-made or natural disaster that injures, endangers, or threatens to endanger the animal;
- at the request of the owner of the animal or an authorized representative of a local, state, or federal agency; and
- within the scope of practice authorized and level of supervision required under Occupations Code provisions relating to veterinarians.

H.B. 1931 expressly does not apply to an act or omission that is grossly negligent or intentional misconduct or to a certified veterinary assistant, licensed veterinary technician, or licensed veterinarian giving medical assistance for or in expectation of compensation from or on behalf of the owner of the animal in excess of reimbursement for expenses incurred.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.