

SUBJECT: Adding missing persons with Alzheimer's disease to Silver Alert system

COMMITTEE: Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Nevárez, Burns, Hinojosa, Holland, J. Johnson, Metcalf,
Schaefer, Wray

0 nays

1 absent — P. King

WITNESSES: For — Melissa Sanchez, Alzheimer's Association; Terrence Sommers,
Law Enforcement; McKenzie Henry; (*Registered, but did not testify*:
Amanda Fredriksen, AARP; Dennis Borel, Coalition of Texans with
Disabilities; William Mills, SAT; Micah Harmon, AJ Louderback, Ricky
Scaman, and Henry Trochesset, Sheriffs' Association of Texas; Mitch
Landry, Texas Municipal Police Association (TMPA))

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Nim Kidd, Texas DPS - Texas
Division of Emergency Management)

BACKGROUND: Government Code, ch. 411, subch. M governs the Silver Alert, a system
used to notify the public of a missing senior citizen with a diagnosed
mental condition. When a senior citizen goes missing, activation of the
system requires that the following information be verified:

- the missing adult is 65 years of age or older;
- his or her location is unknown;
- the senior citizen has an impaired mental condition; and
- the disappearance poses a credible threat to the senior citizen's
health and safety.

Concerns have been raised that missing persons who have been diagnosed

with early onset Alzheimer's disease currently do not qualify for activation of the Silver Alert system, as these patients typically are younger than 65 years old.

DIGEST: HB 2639 would add a missing person with Alzheimer's disease, regardless of age, to the list of individuals for whom the Silver Alert system could be activated.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2017.

NOTES: A companion bill, SB 1192 by Buckingham, was reported favorably from the Senate Criminal Justice Committee on April 20.