

SUBJECT: Allowing purchase of food, beverages for certain emergency responders

COMMITTEE: Appropriations — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 23 ayes — Zerwas, Longoria, Ashby, G. Bonnen, Cospers, Dean, Giddings, Gonzales, González, Howard, Koop, Miller, Muñoz, Perez, Phelan, Raney, Roberts, J. Rodriguez, Rose, Sheffield, Simmons, VanDeaver, Walle

0 nays

4 absent — Capriglione, S. Davis, Dukes, Wu

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 3 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

WITNESSES: No public hearing

BACKGROUND: Government Code, sec. 418.052 allows the Texas Division of Emergency Management to use appropriated funds to buy food and beverages for division personnel who are activated during a disaster and cannot leave their assignment areas.

Concerns have been raised that while the division occasionally uses people outside the division to respond to disasters and other emergency situations, it is not authorized to buy them needed food and beverages.

DIGEST: SB 854 would allow the Texas Division of Emergency Management to use appropriated funds to buy food and beverages for any person activated during an emergency situation, incident, or disaster who, as a result, could not leave his or her assignment area.

This 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.