

- SUBJECT:** Creating a council to advise on business recovery following a disaster
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Nevárez, Paul, Burns, Calanni, Goodwin, Israel, Lang, Tinderholt
0 nays
1 absent — Clardy
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 17 — 31-0
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Dana Harris, Austin Chamber of Commerce; Trent Townsend, DRC Emergency Services; Lindsay Munoz, Greater Houston Partnership; Ender Reed, Harris County Commissioners Court; John McCord, National Federation of Independent Business; Jessica Oney, NRG Energy)
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Following a recommendation by the General Land Office in a report on the lessons learned from the agency's response to Hurricane Harvey, some have suggested creating an advisory council for state and local officials to seek the expertise of the business community on disaster recovery.
- DIGEST:** SB 799 would create a business advisory council to provide advice and expertise on actions state and local governments could take to assist businesses in recovering from a disaster.
- Members.** The council would be composed of 12 members who represented business in Texas. The governor, lieutenant governor, and House speaker would appoint four members each to the council to serve staggered four-year terms. Members would elect a presiding officer.
- A member would not be entitled to compensation but would be entitled to

reimbursement for travel expenses incurred while conducting council business.

Duties. The advisory council would have to:

- advise the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) on policies, rules, and program operations to assist businesses in recovering from a disaster;
- advise TDEM on the state resources and services needed to assist businesses in recovering from a catastrophic loss of electric power; and
- propose solutions to address inefficiencies or problems in the state or local governmental disaster response with respect to impact on businesses and the economy.

The advisory council would meet at the times and locations determined by the presiding officer but could not meet more than four times each year.

TDEM would have to provide administrative support to the advisory council. Existing law governing state agency advisory committees would not apply to the council.

Report. By November 1 of each even-numbered year, the advisory council would have to report on its activities, advice, and proposed solutions to TDEM, the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the House speaker.

The governor, lieutenant governor, and House speaker would have to appoint members to the council as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date, and the appointed members terms would expire as specified in the bill.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.