

- SUBJECT:** Allowing DPS to purchase food and beverages for emergency personnel
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — White, Bowers, Goodwin, Harless, Hefner, E. Morales, Patterson, Schaefer, Tinderholt
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jennifer Szimanski, CLEAT; Jimmy Rodriguez, San Antonio Police Officers Association; Mitch Landry, Texas Municipal Police Association; Shelia Franklin, True Texas Project; Michael Fossum; Tyler Fulkerson; Thomas Parkinson; Zoila Vega-Marchena)
- Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Richard Bohnert; Joshua Tolan)
- DIGEST:** HB 2343 would allow the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to use appropriated funds to buy food and beverages for individuals who were activated to provide services in response to an emergency situation, incident, or disaster and were unable to leave or were required to remain at their assignment areas due to the emergency. The bill also would make the use of funds to provide food and beverages for training functions required of DPS peace officers subject to director approval.
- 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, 2021.
- SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 2343 would allow the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to take proper care of its personnel by restoring the department’s authority to provide food and beverages for officers responding to an emergency or a disaster. This authority was inadvertently revoked when the Texas Division of Emergency Management was moved from DPS's purview to the Texas A&M University System. HB 914 simply would restore the

ability of DPS to provide for its personnel in emergencies or disasters without having to rely on private donations.

The bill would not create a burden on taxpayers since it specifically relates to the use of funds already appropriated to DPS. The department should be able to use these funds to support critical emergency personnel who are risking their health and wellbeing for public safety.

**CRITICS  
SAY:**

HB 2343 would require unfairly that taxpayers subsidize food and beverages for emergency personnel, expenditures that private individuals and businesses must incur for themselves.