

- SUBJECT:** Allowing Grand Prairie to collect a fee for EMS services
- COMMITTEE:** Urban Affairs — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Cortez, Holland, Bernal, Campos, Jarvis Johnson, Minjarez, Morales Shaw
- 2 nays — Gates, Slaton
- WITNESSES:** For — Ron Jensen, City of Grand Prairie
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Local Government Code sec. 143.0052 allows a municipality, by resolution, to establish a fee, applicable to each customer served by a municipal water account and collectible in conjunction with the water services bill, for the costs of emergency medical services, if the municipality:
- has a population between 220,000 and 250,000;
 - is located in a county in which another municipality that has a population of more than 1 million is located; and
 - has its emergency medical services administered by a fire department.
- DIGEST:** HB 2914 would amend the population requirements of Local Government Code sec. 143.0052 to include a municipality with a population greater than 150,000 and less than 250,000 (Grand Prairie).
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.
- SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 2914 would allow the city of Grand Prairie to impose a fee to defray the cost of emergency medical services. The unique geography of the city creates particular challenges to public safety service delivery, and the city's EMS system currently operates at a multimillion dollar net loss. HB 2914 would authorize Grand Prairie to charge a fee that would help to

offset this loss and ensure that EMS services had a steady source of funding.

HB 2914 would not create a new category of fees but simply would allow Grand Prairie to use an existing funding tool that has already been authorized by the Legislature for other cities. It is up to the Legislature to decide whether these fees should exist or not, but Grand Prairie's EMS services are too critical to be underfunded.

CRITICS
SAY:

HB 2914 would expand the use of fees that should not be authorized. Essential local services should be funded by municipal taxes and subject to voter approval.