

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R3175 MCK-D

S.B. 1651
By: Bernsen
Finance
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As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Based upon changes to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, mitigation planning is now required to ensure eligibility to receive enhanced amounts of federal disaster assistance funds and pre-disaster mitigation program funds. Pre-disaster planning can better address comprehensive long-term needs of the community and can also provide more opportunities for local partnerships, support, and commitments. When such planning exists, there should be procedures to quickly approve and implement the procedures whenever funding opportunities occur. As proposed, S.B. 1651 requires the Division of Emergency Management in the office of the governor to improve hazard mitigation services by assisting local governments that do not have resources to manage hazard mitigation grant program projects with developing and implementing projects and applying for funding from the hazard mitigation grant program, and by developing and carrying out certain other procedures to improve hazard mitigation services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 418C, Government Code, by adding Section 418.049, as follows:

Sec. 418.049. MITIGATION SERVICES. Requires the division of emergency management in the office of the governor (division) to improve hazard mitigation services by:

- (1) assisting local governments that do not have resources to manage hazard mitigation grant program projects with developing and implementing projects and applying for funding from the hazard mitigation grant program;
- (2) developing procedures:
 - (A) to provide direct technical assistance to local governments for the development and implementation of local hazard mitigation planning; and
 - (B) to quickly approve hazard mitigation grant programs project applications that are consistent with both local and state hazard mitigation planning;
- (3) developing procedures for predisaster and postdisaster operations of the enhanced state hazard mitigation team that include providing technical assistance to determine causes of disasters and recommend risk reduction measures;
- (4) enhancing the usability of and local government access to historical and operational hazard vulnerability and risk data, maps, and graphics;

(5) administering interagency contracts with universities and other organizations to provide enhanced technical information and services to local governments;

(6) developing and conducting specialized training and developing and distributing guidance, hazard assessment, and informational materials for local governments, disaster victims, and the general public;

(7) serving as a clearinghouse and facilitating access for local governments to information, eligibility requirements, and application procedures for federal and state hazard assessment and mitigation grant programs;

(8) administering federal and state programs, including the hazard mitigation grant program, the predisaster mitigation program, the coastal specific property protection mitigation program, and local grant programs;

(9) coordinating and assisting local government participation in project impact activities;

(10) participating in partnership activities with associations and organizations, including the Texas Coastal Advisory Team, the Emergency Management Association of Texas, and the Texas Flood Plain Management Association; and

(11) conducting regular project site visits to identify and resolve issues for and provide assistance and guidance to local government hazard mitigation grant programs project officers to expedite approval, implementation, and completion of their projects.

SECTION 2. Requires the division to hire three additional full-time employees to improve mitigation-related customer services.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2001.