

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 407
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Natural Resources
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, home-delivered meal services exist in almost every county in Texas. These services are paid for through the Department of Aging and Disability Services, local area agencies on aging, and private donations. New sources of funding are needed to serve eligible persons as the population of the elderly and persons with disabilities increases.

H.B. 407 increases access to home-delivered meals for elderly persons and persons with disabilities through the creation of a home-delivered meal grant program in the Department of Agriculture.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted by inference to the Department of Agriculture under SECTION 2 of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 12, Agriculture Code, by adding Section 12.042, as follows:

Sec. 12.042. HOME-DELIVERED MEAL GRANT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Department of Agriculture (TDA) to establish a home-delivered meal grant program (program) to benefit homebound elderly or disabled people. Requires the program to be designed to help defray the costs of providing home-delivered meals that are not fully funded by the Department of Aging and Disability Services or an area agency on aging.

(b) Requires TDA to make grants to qualifying organizations that provide home-delivered meals to the homebound elderly and disabled from appropriated funds. Prohibits the TDA from using more than five percent of the appropriated funds for the administration of the grant program.

(c) Requires an organization applying for a grant to meet certain criteria.

(d) Requires the county in which the organization provides meals to make a grant to the organization before an organization may receive a grant from TDA. Provides that the maximum amount TDA may provide to organizations in the county under Subsection (h) is reduced to an amount in proportion to the amount by which the county grant is less than 25 cents for each elderly resident if the county makes a grant to the organization in an amount less than 25 cents for each person at least 60 years of age who resides in the county according to the most recent federal decennial census.

(e) Requires TDA to require an organization seeking a grant to file an application in a form approved by TDA. Requires the application to be notarized and signed by the organization's executive director and board chair if applicable, be postmarked not later than November 1, and include certain information.

(f) Requires an organization that applies for a grant for meals delivered in more than one county to submit a separate application in each county.

(g) Requires TDA to annually determine the total amount of money available for grants under this section and the number of residents at least 60 years of age in this state and the number of residents at least 60 years of age in each county in this state, according to the most recent decennial census.

(h) Prohibits grants awarded to qualifying organizations in a county in a state fiscal year from exceeding an amount determined by a certain formula, except as provided by Subsections (d), (i), and (j).

(i) Requires TDA, not later than February 1 of each year, to make a grant to each qualifying organization that has submitted an approved application under this section. Requires TDA to make grants in an amount equal to one dollar for each meal that the organization delivered to homebound elderly in the county in the preceding state fiscal year that was not fully funded by the Department of Aging and Disability Services or an area agency on aging subject to Subsections (d) and (h). Requires TDA to reduce the grants proportionally to each qualifying organization in a county so that the total amount of the grants to the organizations does not exceed the amount described by Subsection (h) if more than one organization delivers meals in that county.

(j) Requires TDA to use unspent funds to proportionally increase the grants to each qualifying organization if the amount of the grants made by TDA under Subsection (i) is less than the amount appropriated to fund the program under this section in a state fiscal year.

(k) Provides that the home-delivered meal fund is an account in the general revenue fund. Authorizes money in the account to be appropriated only to TDA to award grants and to pay for the operation of the program.

SECTION 2. Requires TDA to adopt rules required under Section 12.042, Agriculture Code, as soon as practical after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.