

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R9520 ADM-F

S.B. 1276
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Economic Development
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Tourists visit the City of Bastrop every year and stay overnight in area hotels or the nearby Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort and Spa. They come to visit Bastrop State Park to hike, play golf, swim, or to see the isolated stand of loblolly pines, or the Lost Pines, paddle the Colorado River, or stroll along historic Main Street.

The Bastrop complex wildfire, in September of 2011, was the worst and most destructive fire in Texas history, burning over 34,000 acres and destroying over 1,700 homes and buildings. The fire burned over 96 percent of Bastrop State Park, engulfing over four million trees. If area fire services had not been available, the wildfire could have spread even farther and potentially threatened the city of Bastrop, its convention facilities, and possibly the Hyatt Lost Pines.

S.B. 1276 allows the City of Bastrop to use its current hotel and occupancy tax revenue for fire suppression vehicles and facilities. By ensuring the safety of visitors, this bill will enable Bastrop to attract and retain tourism.

As proposed, S.B. 1276 amends current law relating to the use of municipal hotel occupancy taxes in certain municipalities.

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 Section 351.101, Tax Code, by adding Subsection (a-1), as follows:

(a-1) Authorizes a municipality with a population of less than 10,000 that is the county seat of a county with a population of less than 80,000 and that is adjacent to a state park that suffered severe damage from a wildfire to use revenue derived from the tax authorized by this chapter (Municipal Hotel Occupancy Taxes) to acquire fire suppression vehicles and construct fire protection facilities to promote and encourage tourism by ensuring the enhanced safety of tourists in addition to the uses authorized by Subsection (a) (relating to authorizing that revenue from the municipal hotel occupancy tax be used to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry, and limiting that use to certain expenditures).

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.