

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R23081 SMT-D

H.B. 1510
By: Isaac (Zaffirini)
Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs
5/19/2017
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, emergency services districts (ESDs) are required to submit annual reports to the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), which subsumed the Texas Department of Rural Affairs in 2011. While this information is intended to be made available to the public, reportedly it is difficult to access. What's more, TDA also is charged with providing general information and technical advice to ESD commissioners. ESDs, however, are unrelated to agriculture and could be better served by another agency more closely tied to their mission of public health.

Accordingly, H.B. 1510 transfers ESDs' annual reporting from TDA to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) within the Department of Public Safety. The bill further requires that reports be published online to ensure full transparency. Finally, H.B. 1510 transfers the responsibility of providing general information and technical advice to ESDs from TDA to TDEM.

H.B. 1510 amends current law relating to the transfer of certain functions related to emergency services districts from the Department of Agriculture to the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

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. Transfers Section 487.061, Government Code, to Subchapter C, Chapter 418, Government Code, redesignates it as Section 418.053, Government Code, and amends it, as follows:

Sec. 418.053. EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), rather than the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), to serve as a resource to provide interested rural communities with certain information.

(b) Authorizes TDEM, rather than TDA, to provide certain information to fire departments and homeowners in rural areas.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 775.083(a), (b), and (c), Health and Safety Code, as follows:

(a) Requires an emergency services district, on or before January 1 of each year, to file with TDEM, rather than with the Texas Department of Rural Affairs, an annual report that includes certain information.

(b) and (c) Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Provides that, not later than January 1, 2018, the following are transferred from TDA to TDEM:

(1) the powers, duties, functions, programs, and activities of TDA relating to the duties described by Section 418.053, Government Code, as transferred, redesignated, and amended by this Act;

(2) any obligations and contracts of TDA that are directly related to implementing a power, duty, function, program, or activity described by Subdivision (1); and

(3) all property and records in the custody of TDA that are related to a power, duty, function, program, or activity described by Subdivision (1) and all funds appropriated by the legislature for that power, duty, function, program, or activity.

SECTION 4. Makes application of Section 775.083, Health and Safety Code, prospective to January 1, 2019.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2017.