

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 2345
By: Walle et al. (Hinojosa)
Water & Rural Affairs
5/18/2019
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The report issued by the Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas, which was established following Hurricane Harvey, included recommendations relating to resources to facilitate disaster mitigation, response, and recovery. H.B. 2345 seeks to act on certain of those recommendations by requiring the Texas Water Development Board to create a comprehensive inventory of needed mitigation and resiliency projects statewide, by establishing the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas, and by establishing the Flood Event Partnership Options Special Study Committee.

H.B. 2345 amends the Education Code to establish the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas as a component of Texas A&M University under the management and direction of the board of directors of The Texas A&M University System. The bill sets out the institute's duties with respect to disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery and flood planning and mitigation. The bill authorizes the institute to employ personnel and to accept a gift or grant from any public or private source for its benefit.

H.B. 2345 amends the Water Code to require the Texas Water Development Board to create an inventory of flood mitigation and resiliency projects, develop a method of prioritizing such projects, and coordinate with the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas. H.B. 2345 establishes the Flood Event Partnership Options Special Study Committee to study the appropriate structure, means of administration, and membership of state-local partnerships to address flooding events in Texas.

H.B. 2345 sets out the factors to be addressed in the study and requires the committee to deliver a report not later than December 1, 2020, on its determinations based on the study to specified state and legislative officers and each member of the legislature and to deliver related information to those persons on request. The bill sets out the committee's composition, requires the governor to appoint the committee members not later than October 1, 2019, and requires The Texas A&M University System to provide the committee certain assistance and resources on request. The committee is abolished and these provisions expire May 1, 2021. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.H.B. 2345 amends current law relating to the creation of the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas.

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 Subchapter E, Chapter 86, Education Code, by adding Section 86.82, as follows:

- (a) Defines "institute" to mean the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas for purposes of this section.

(b) Provides that the institute is a component of Texas A&M University (TAMU).

(c) Provides that the institute is under the management and direction of the board of directors (board) of The Texas A&M University System (board).

(d) Requires the institute to:

(1) develop data analytics tools to support disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery by the state, its political subdivisions, and the public;

(2) create and maintain web-based analytical and visual tools to communicate disaster risks and ways to reduce those risks, including tools that work on the level of individual parcels of land;

(3) provide evidence-based information and solutions to aid in the formation of state and local partnerships to support disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery;

(4) collect, display, and communicate comprehensive flood-related information, including applicable updated inundation maps, for use by decision-makers and the public; and

(5) collaborate with institutions of higher education, as that term is defined by Section 61.003 (Definitions), state agencies, local governments, and other political subdivisions to accomplish the purposes of this section.

(e) Authorizes the institute to employ personnel, including experts in planning, engineering, hydrology, ecology, and economics.

(f) Authorizes the institute to accept a gift or grant from any public or private source for the benefit of the institute.

SECTION 2. Provides that the institute is required to implement a provision of this Act only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. Authorizes, but does not require, the institute, if the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, to implement a provision of this Act using other appropriations available for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.