Legislative Study Group (LSG) Floor Report — Calendar for Thursday, August 21, 2025

Representative: **Desk:**

Major State Calendar				
HB 1 By: Darby | Meyer | DeAyala | McQueeney	Relating to resident youth camp emergency plans and preparedness; authorizing a civil penalty.	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	HB 1 — titled the Youth Camp Alert, Mitigation, Preparedness, and Emergency Response (Youth CAMPER) Act — would require camp operators to develop and annually update plans for a wide range of emergencies, including natural disasters. **The bill author is expected to introduce a floor substitute on the House Committee Report of HB 1. This report outlines the contents of that floor substitute.** **Emergency Plan Requirements** Under HB 1, resident youth camp operators are required to develop and implement a written emergency plan that covers a wide range of scenarios, including: • natural disasters and fires; • lost campers; • transportation emergencies; • serious illnesses, injuries, and accidents; • fatalities; • unauthorized individuals on the premises; • aquatic emergencies (if applicable); and • other events designated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) rules. Each plan must designate an emergency preparedness supervisor, be reviewed and updated annually, and include procedures for (1) sheltering or evacuating campers, (2) controlling vehicular traffic, and (3) notifying local emergency and camp staff. Camp operators must notify DFPS of any changes to the camp's property, structures, or activities to determine if an update to the emergency plan is appropriate. Plans must be submitted by May 6, 2026.	**Favorable**

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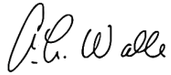
			Training and Notice Campers must receive developmentally-appropriate instruction on the emergency plan and the contact information of the emergency preparedness supervisor at the start of each camping session. Lastly, operators must provide camp staff and volunteers with comprehensive training on the plan before camp begins and document their completion. The plan must be shared with campers, their parents or guardians, the relevant emergency services district or county, and all camp staff and volunteers. **Compliance** A newly-created Resident Youth Camp Safety Multidisciplinary Team within DFPS would develop proposed minimum standards for the emergency plans, with final approval resting with the executive director. If the DFPS finds a plan deficient, operators have 10 days to submit a corrective action plan and 30 days to make revisions. Other compliance mechanisms include: • **Attorney General Action:** The AG may pursue civil penalties of up to $1,000 per violation per day, with collected penalties remitted to DFPS to offset costs related to enforcing the bill. • **Denial or suspension of licensure as a youth camp:** DFPS must suspend licensure until compliance is reached. • **Online complaint portal:** The camp operator must include a link on their website for campers, parents, staff, and volunteers to report non-compliance. HB 1 does not allow exceptions or waivers to these requirements. Previous renditions of the bill allowed a "financial hardship exemption," with operators still required to meet minimum standards. DFPS must adopt rules by March 1, 2026, and camps must begin implementing emergency plans by May 1, 2026. The bill takes effect immediately with a two-thirds vote or, otherwise, on the 91st day after the legislative session ends. **Implementation Considerations** Developing effective emergency plans requires accurately assessing risks, outlining specific procedures, and tailoring responses to each camp's environment, which can be costly. DFPS guidelines and rules should help mitigate these expenses. However, creating a plan merely to satisfy a requirement will not achieve its purpose. Although the fiscal note states that costs cannot be determined, it's critical that the state continually invest time and resources in the emergency plans for them to have the desired effect.	



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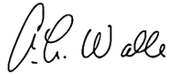
HB 2 By: King | Meyer | Moody | Wilson | Darby	Relating to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, including required training for justices of the peace and responding to mass fatality events; requiring a license; authorizing fees.	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	HB 2 includes a variety of disaster-related provisions that emerged from the Disaster Joint Committee hearings, focused on enhanced emergency management training and volunteer management. **Justice of the Peace Required Training** According to the Justice of the Peace and Constable Association of Texas, Justices of the Peace (JPs) already have discretion as to whether an autopsy is necessary. However, there are some instances in which a "death inquest" — an investigation into the causes and circumstances of a death — is required, such as when the deceased is a child younger than 6 years old. Confusion about these requirements arose during the July 4 flood, which the bill seeks to address. HB 2 would require JPs in counties without medical examiners to complete mass fatality management training within their first year in office. The training would include best practices for handling mass fatality events, such as real-time communication with victims' families. All training must be completed by December 1, 2026. JPs are already required to complete training hours after being elected, which include instruction on death inquests. However, according to the Justice of the Peace and Constable Association, the Texas Justice Court Training Center recently faced a 20% state budget cut and was considering reducing its inquest services. **To implement this new requirement, additional state resources may be necessary.** **Creates Emergency Management License** HB 2 creates new, state-issued, emergency management licenses. Then it requires local emergency management coordinators to be licensed. Emergency management coordinators are appointed by emergency management directors, typically mayors or county judges. Currently, only coordinators in counties with populations over 50,000 must complete at least three hours of training, and there are no minimum qualifications for appointment. Under HB 2, coordinators must complete training within six months of designation. The Texas Commission on Fire Protection would oversee the licensing program, which would include four levels — basic, intermediate, advanced, and master — each with training requirements set by the commission. The basic level would require at least 40 hours of training. Applicants must also pass an FBI fingerprint background check and cannot have a felony or any offense related to the duties of an emergency management coordinator. The commission, in coordination with the Texas Division of	**Favorable**

			Emergency Management (TDEM), would establish a database of licensed coordinators for local emergency management directors. TDEM may also create an advisory committee to help implement the program. Licenses would be valid for one year, after which coordinators must complete at least 16 hours of continuing education to renew. Training requirements must be met within 180 days of the law taking effect, which begins on the 91st day after the legislative session ends. **Establishes Statewide Volunteer Management System for Disasters** HB 2 requires TDEM to create a statewide volunteer registration and management database to register, credential, and manage disaster volunteers under the direction of state or local officials. Applicants could apply online and must undergo a routine background check (less extensive than an FBI fingerprint check). Applications may be denied based on criminal history "to ensure public safety and operational integrity." Volunteers already affiliated with certain organizations would not need to apply. While the database would serve as the first source of volunteers, TDEM would still have discretion to accept help from individuals who are not registered. **Creates a Mass Fatality Response Team** The bill also directs DSHS and TDEM to establish a mass fatality rapid response team. This team would deploy to mass fatality events to guide local officials and staff, coordinate resource activation, and assist with search and recovery operations. In addition, the department must develop a controlled mass fatality tracking system.	
HB 3 By: King	Relating to the interoperability of emergency communication equipment and infrastructure in this state, including the creation and operation of the Texas Interoperability Council, a grant program	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	HB 3 is largely similar to HB 13 (89R) from the regular session — which overwhelmingly passed the House but stalled in the Senate — but it adds a major new section that could create significant logistical hurdles for local public safety entities. As before, the bill would establish the Texas Interoperability Council and create a grant program to improve emergency response coordination and address systemic challenges during increasingly severe natural disasters. **New Provisions** Instead of a six-member council appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House, this version of HB 3 limits appointments to the Governor, but also specifies the areas of expertise that council members should represent. More substantial, though, is the new section requiring state oversight of public safety radio communication system purchases by political subdivisions. Until the end of 2026, such purchases must be reviewed and approved by the Governor; beginning in 2027, that responsibility would transfer to the Interoperability Council.	**Favorable with Concerns**



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	administered by the council, and the purchase of certain public safety radio communication systems.		"Public safety radio communication system" is defined broadly to include infrastructure, equipment, software, and other products used by governmental entities in law enforcement, fire protection, EMS, and disaster response. The council must adopt rules to ensure new systems do not materially impair interoperability with those used by other local entities. These rules must establish minimum technical specifications, align with the state's existing strategic plan, and avoid unnecessary or burdensome procedures for interoperability. HB 3 also directs the council to administer a grant program for local governments for the purchase of equipment, construction of communication infrastructure, and employee training, though the bill does not specify the total funding of the grant. **Concerns** Because this new section of the bill is so substantial, but did not receive a public hearing, local stakeholders had little opportunity to provide input. Some have raised serious concerns about the level of state overreach it imposes, along with logistical issues it creates with its broad language around "public safety radio communication systems." As written, the bill would likely require every cell phone, radio, iPad, and piece of equipment for local police, fire, and emergency medical services to receive state approval before purchase. While the goal of interoperability is worthwhile, stakeholders argue that this is not the right approach. Instead, some suggest the council should issue guidelines for localities to follow when buying new equipment. If an amendment were proposed that addresses this issue, the LSG would be Favorable (no concerns).	
HB 5 By: Bonnen	Relating to making supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and giving direction and adjustment authority regarding those appropriations.	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	HB 5 is an appropriations bill responding to the Hill Country flood disaster. The bill uses the Economic Stabilization Fund to make the following appropriations: • $200 million to match any federal money received in response to this disaster, and for the disaster needs of the state; • $50 million for the Trusteed Programs of the Governor to make local grants in affected counties; • $24 million for grants to improve weather forecasting in the Hill Country; • $50 million in contingency appropriations for HB 3. Should HB 3 not pass, that money would be reappropriated for the Governor's interoperable radio communications program. The bill goes into effect immediately with a two-thirds vote of members present. HB 5 is a step in the right	**<u>Favorable</u>**

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			direction in a time when federal FEMA funding is more uncertain than ever, and the current administration's philosophy aims to shift disaster response onto the states.	
HB 20 By: Darby | Louderback | Barry	Relating to certain measures to prevent and reduce fraudulent charitable solicitations and theft during disasters, including establishing a voluntary accreditation program for disaster relief organizations; creating a criminal offense; increasing a criminal penalty; providing a civil cause of action.	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	HB 20 aims to address fraudulent charitable solicitations through education, a tip hotline, new criminal offenses, and civil liabilities. **Education, Hotline, and Accreditation** HB 20 would require TDEM and the Attorney General to create educational materials to help the public identify and avoid fraudulent charitable solicitations, which often occur in the aftermath of natural disasters. It would also create a fraud hotline, operated by the attorney general, for persons to report suspected fraudulent donation solicitations. Additionally, HB 20 would also establish a voluntary accreditation program for organizations that solicit donations to help the public identify reputable organizations. An accredited organization would receive an official seal for credibility. The state can use this accreditation in consideration for state and local grants. **Criminal and Civil Penalties** HB 20 makes it a state jail felony to steal property valued at less than $30,000 that is in a disaster area if the property was obtained through the offender's status or claimed status as a disaster volunteer. A disaster area is defined as any area under an evacuation order or disaster declaration issued by federal, state, or local officials. The bill also creates a new offense of "malicious solicitation of a disaster victim or for disaster response or recovery." This offense applies when a person, with intent to defraud or harm, (1) solicits donations by falsely claiming they will go towards disaster relief, (2) solicits donations on behalf of a disaster relief organization but keeps the funds, (3) charges disaster victims after services such as debris removal after leading them to believe the services were free as a volunteer, or (4) solicits money by falsely claiming they will search for or return a missing relative. These penalties would be a third-degree felony for a first-time offense, a second-degree felony for a second or subsequent offense, or a first-degree felony if, when committing the fraud, the actor fabricated an accreditation seal as established in this bill. In addition, HB 20 creates civil liability for malicious solicitation committed during a disaster. A person who engages in this conduct is liable to the donee or donor (or their estates) whose funds were collected. Courts must award three times	**<u>Favorable</u>**

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			the amount of donations collected plus attorney's fees to prevailing plaintiffs. These provisions do not limit the ability of donees or donors to also pursue exemplary damages under existing civil law.	
HB 22 By: Bonnen	Relating to the authority of the comptroller to provide funding for the deployment and operation of certain emergency communication equipment.	Disaster Preparedness & Flooding, Select 9 Ayes 0 Nays 0 PNV 0 Absent	**HB 22 allows the broadband infrastructure fund to be used for disaster infrastructure projects.** HB 2 would expand the allowable uses of the Broadband Infrastructure Fund — created by HB 9 (88R) and funded by Prop A in 2023 — to include early warning disaster notification systems and interoperable emergency communications infrastructure. The Broadband Development Office is authorized to provide contracts, grants, low-interest loans, or other financial incentives for these reasons. Although the fund currently has a balance of $1.36 billion, with an additional $3.3 billion in federal funds available separately, it has so far been limited to broadband development. HB 22 would authorize grants, contracts, low-interest loans, and other incentives through a new emergency communications systems program under the Broadband Development Office.	**Favorable**

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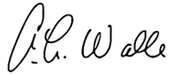

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