

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
2009S0639-1

S.B. 1890
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S/C on Flooding & Evacuations
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, there are various city ordinances regarding temporary signage. After an emergency declaration has been declared for areas hit by a hurricane, the commissioner of the Texas Department of Insurance (commissioner) can issue bulletins to insurance companies instructing them to quickly contact policyholders to file and settle claims. Some cities have ordinances in place that prevent such signage from being temporarily erected, even if only to help recover from a natural disaster. This amendment creates a statewide statute to be enforced during a declared natural disaster. S.B. 1890 will help to ensure that victims of storms and hurricanes in Texas can receive expedited insurance claims service at locations convenient to policy holders, upon declaration of a state disaster.

As proposed, S.B. 1890 authorizes the commissioner to issue, on declaration of a state disaster, an order to suspend enforcement of the regulation of on-premises outdoor signs for certain municipalities if the commissioner finds that such a suspension would facilitate the filing and processing of claims by persons affected by the disaster.

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 B, Chapter 542, Insurance Code, by adding Section 542.062 as follows:

Sec. 542.062. COMMISSIONER POWERS DURING DISASTER. Authorizes the commissioner of insurance (commissioner), on declaration of a state disaster under Section 418.014 (Declaration of State of Disaster), Government Code, to issue an order to suspend, for a period not longer than the duration of the declaration, enforcement of the regulation of on-premises outdoor signs by municipalities under Subchapter Z (Miscellaneous Provisions), Chapter 216 (Regulation of Signs by Municipalities), Local Government Code, for municipalities located in counties within and adjacent to the counties in the disaster area specified by the declaration, if the commissioner finds that such a suspension would facilitate the filing and processing of claims by persons affected by the disaster.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.