

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2335  
By: Walle  
Homeland Security & Public Safety  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been reported that in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which is responsible for administering the federal program to provide supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) benefits to disaster victims in Texas, experienced difficulties in finding sites that met federal requirements for the in-person application process for such SNAP benefits. H.B. 2335 seeks to address this issue by requiring HHSC to coordinate with county judges to evaluate, develop, and maintain a list of potential sites that will allow localities to more rapidly deploy benefits after a natural disaster.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2335 amends the Human Resources Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to do the following:

- collaborate with county judges to evaluate, develop, and maintain a list of potential sites that meet federal requirements for in-person application for benefits under the federal program to provide supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) benefits to victims of a disaster and to annually update the list; and
- assess the feasibility of, subject to being granted any necessary federal waiver, accepting program benefits applications online and by telephone and staffing a high-volume call center to process those applications.

H.B. 2335 requires HHSC to consult with federal officials, including the members of the Texas delegation to the United States Senate and House of Representatives and the United States Department of Agriculture, regarding repealing the in-person application requirement for SNAP benefits for victims of a disaster. The bill requires the executive commissioner of HHSC, if necessary, to develop and seek a waiver or other appropriate authorization from the United States secretary of agriculture to allow submission of applications online and by telephone for SNAP benefits for victims of a disaster.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.