

SUBJECT: Purchase of food and beverages for certain staff responding to emergencies

COMMITTEE: Transportation — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Canales, Landgraf, Bernal, Goldman, Hefner, Krause, Leman,
Ortega, Raney, Thierry, E. Thompson

0 nays

2 absent — Y. Davis, Martinez

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Karen Rove, AGC of Texas
Highway Heavy; Aimee Bertrand, Harris County Commissioners Court;
Russell Schaffner, Tarrant County)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Michael Lee, Texas Department of
Transportation)

DIGEST: HB 2708 would give the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
the authority to use appropriated funds for purchasing food and beverages
for a department employee who was providing services in response to an
emergency situation, an incident that endangered the health or safety of a
person, or a disaster and was unable to leave the assignment area due to
the emergency.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds
record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take
effect September 1, 2019.

SUPPORTERS
SAY: HB 2708 would allow the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
to purchase food and beverages for employees responding to an
emergency situation. Currently, TxDOT does not have explicit authority
to purchase these items unless the governor has declared an emergency

disaster, meaning pre-staged employees outside of the path of an impending disaster may not legally have food or beverages provided to them. A recommendation of the Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas was to grant TxDOT the authority to pre-purchase and stockpile food and water for hurricane season.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No concerns identified.