

**SUBJECT:** Establishing grant program for nonprofit food banks for disaster response

**COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Nevárez, Paul, Burns, Calanni, Clardy, Goodwin, Israel, Lang, Tinderholt

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — Derrick Chubbs, Central Texas Food Bank; Celia Cole, Feeding Texas; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Aimee Bertrand, Harris County Commissioners Court; Michael Barba, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Joshua Houston, Texas Impact; Nataly Saucedo, United Ways of Texas; Paul Martin)

Against — None

**BACKGROUND:** Interested parties have noted that during federally declared disasters, local food banks can source a greater variety of food faster and at a lower cost to the state than FEMA due to their infrastructure, experience responding to crisis, and unique relationships with the food industry in the state.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 3668 would require the Office of the Governor to establish a program to provide grants to nonprofit organizations in Texas for distribution to nonprofit food banks to prepare for or respond to disasters.

In order to be eligible to receive a grant under the bill, the nonprofit organization would be required to have at least five years of experience coordinating a statewide network of nonprofit food banks and charitable organizations that distribute food to needy or low-income individuals during disasters. The organization also would be required to be a member of the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

The bill would authorize the grants to be used to reimburse a nonprofit food bank for all or part of the costs incurred for:

- maintaining an inventory of emergency food boxes in preparation for a disaster;
- purchasing, storing, and transporting food for distribution during a disaster; and
- purchasing capital equipment necessary to operate during a disaster, including back-up generators, mobile food pantries, trucks, meal preparation units, forklifts, technology and other equipment.

The bill would require a contract between the office and each grant recipient. The contract would include performance requirements and would authorize the office to recoup grant money from a recipient for failure to comply with the terms of the contract.

The Office of the Governor would establish procedures for the submission and evaluation of a proposal. The office could solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source for the purpose of awarding grants under this section.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**NOTES:**

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill's fiscal implications would be dependent on future appropriations by the Legislature. The House-passed version of the general appropriations act for fiscal 2020-21 currently contains \$25 million for consideration in Art. 11 for the bill's purposes.