

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
78R645 ATP-D

S.B. 363
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, Section 775.083, Health and Safety Code, requires emergency services districts (ESDs) to file an annual report with the Secretary of State's Office containing basic information such as the district's address, office holders, legal counsel, and tax rate. However, the Secretary of State's Office does not provide a comprehensive database of ESDs from which information may be extracted. The Office of Rural Community Affairs (ORCA) is working on the collection of the same information for purposes of analysis and research so that they may better serve ESDs by providing technical and procedural assistance. Some feel that the Internet-based system should provide for more streamlined data entry and collection. ORCA anticipates no fiscal impact, and the Secretary of State's Office and ORCA support this bill. As proposed, S.B. 363 moves the annual reporting requirements for ESDs from the Secretary of State's Office to ORCA and directs ORCA to develop and maintain an Internet-based system for use by the public to view and search the database.

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 Section 775.083, Health and Safety Code, as follows:

Sec. 775.083. ANNUAL REPORT. (a) Requires an emergency services district (district) on or before January 1 of each year to file with the Office of Rural Community Affairs, rather than the secretary of state, an annual report that includes certain information.

(b) Prohibits the Office of Rural Community Affairs, rather than the secretary of state, from charging a fee for filing the report.

(c) Requires the Office of Rural Community Affairs to develop and maintain an Internet-based system that enables a district to securely file the report and update the district's information, and the public to view, in a searchable format, the reports filed by districts under this section.

(d) Requires a district to update the district's information using the Internet-based system before the end of the calendar quarter in which the district's information changes, if the information included in the district's annual report changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 776E, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 776.083, as follows:

Sec. 776.083. ANNUAL REPORT. (a) Requires a district on or before January 1 of each year to file with the Office of Rural Community Affairs an annual report that includes certain information.

(b) Prohibits the Office of Rural Community Affairs from charging a fee for filing the report.

(c) Requires the Office of Rural Community Affairs to develop and maintain an Internet-based system that enables a district to securely file the report and update the district's information and the public to view, in a searchable format, the reports filed by districts under this section.

(d) Requires a district to update the district's information using the Internet-based system before the end of the calendar quarter in which the district's information changes, if the information in the district's annual report changes.

SECTION 3. Requires the Office of Rural Community Affairs to develop an Internet-based system as required by Sections 775.083(c) and 776.083(c), Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, before January 1, 2004.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2003.