

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R20034 MXM-D

S.B. 1905
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

For the last four years, the city of Balmorhea has maintained a volunteer emergency medical service for the southern end of Reeves County. These areas include the city of Balmorhea, Toyahvale, Boragado, Verhalen, Lake Balmorhea, Balmorhea State Park, Saragosa, and the junction of Interstate Highway 10 and Interstate Highway 20. Emergency medical services often respond to calls on United States Highway 285 and State Highway 17.

With the closest basic life support hospital 37 miles away, and the nearest medical hub with advanced facilities 120 miles away, conditions make for a much needed service.

Attempts at creating a hospital district in the southern end of the county were unable to generate the tax base needed to support this service and due to a loss of funding and personnel, these emergency services may no longer be available after the first of the year.

This legislation would support emergency services in the area by deferring \$1 from the admission to the state park to support emergency services in the area.

As proposed, S.B. 1905 amends current law relating to the provision of emergency services in certain rural counties using admission fees charged at state parks.

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 Subtitle B, Title 11, Local Government Code, by adding Chapter 354, as follows:

CHAPTER 354. EMERGENCY SERVICES IN RURAL COUNTIES

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 354.001. **APPLICABILITY.** Provides that this chapter applies only to a county with a population of less than 20,000, a state park, and an interstate highway.

[Reserves Sections 354.002-354.050 for expansion.]

SUBCHAPTER B. STATE PARKS

Sec. 354.051. **ADMISSION TO PARK; USE OF MONEY FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES.** (a) Requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to use \$1 from the admission to a state park in the county for the purposes described by this section. Authorizes revenue collected under this section to be appropriated only to TPWD to award grants to a county that provides emergency services that directly or indirectly benefit the park.

(b) Requires the county to use the money to pay for emergency services provided by the county in the county, including emergency services provided by volunteers.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.