

SUBJECT: Requiring 911 dispatchers be trained to coach CPR over the phone

COMMITTEE: Homeland Security and Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — White, Bowers, Goodwin, Harless, Hefner, E. Morales, Patterson, Schaefer, Tinderholt

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Watson Kohankie; Kevin Patel; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Alec Puente, American Heart Association; Bill Kelly, City of Houston Mayor's Office; John Hawkins, Texas Hospital Association; Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association; Joel Romo, The Cooper Institute/Austin EMS Association/Association of Texas EMS Professionals; Shelia Franklin, True Texas Project; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Kim Vickers, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement)

DIGEST: CSHB 786 would require all telecommunicators in the state to be trained during their basic licensing or continuing education courses on how to coach cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) over the phone. The training would be required to:

- use the most current nationally recognized emergency cardiovascular care guidelines;
- incorporate recognition protocols for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest; and
- provide information on best practices for relaying compression-only CPR instructions to callers.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement would be required to adopt rules to implement tele-CPR training as soon as practicable after the bill's

effective date.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 786 would save the lives of Texans by enabling a bystander, coached by a 911 dispatcher over the phone, to perform CPR on the spot until paramedics arrived. By requiring dispatchers be trained in tele-CPR before they could become licensed or as part of their continuing training, people in cardiac arrest could receive CPR sooner, which could result in a significant increase in survival rates. Requiring the training to adhere to best practices and nationally recognized emergency cardiovascular care guidelines, would help to ensure consistent and high-quality standards across the state.

A study from the American Heart Association (AHA) indicated the certain individuals who received tele-CPR had a 64 percent better chance of surviving than those who did not. Unfortunately, not everyone is trained in CPR and Texas does not mandate that 911 dispatchers or other licensed telecommunicators be trained to coach the lifesaving technique by phone.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement easily could incorporate the training into existing education for telecommunicators, so it would not impose any additional costs on the state, counties, or municipalities.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

No concerns identified.