

## BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center  
80R17119 TAD-D

H.B. 1493  
By: Bonnen (Janek)  
S/C on Higher Education  
5/16/2007  
Engrossed

### AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, no center exists in this state for the study of severe storms.

H.B. 1493 creates the Severe Storm Research and Planning Center (center) and outlines the administration, purpose, and overall objectives of the center. The center will work with the University of Houston, Rice University, Texas A&M University, and others to provide sophisticated modeling that will give much more accurate warnings when storms approach the Texas coasts. Ultimately, the models will be able to determine what neighborhoods need to be evacuated, rather than entire counties, drastically reducing the number of people who will be on the roads.

### 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 H, Title 3, Education Code, by adding Chapter 155, as follows:

#### CHAPTER 155. SEVERE STORM RESEARCH AND PLANNING CENTER

Sec. 155.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "center" and "commission."

Sec. 155.002. ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE. Requires the regional planning commission, council of governments, or similar regional planning agency created under Chapter 391 (Regional Planning Commissions), Local Government Code, whose membership includes the most populous county that borders on the Gulf of Mexico or on a bay or inlet of the Gulf of Mexico (commission) to create a severe storm research and planning center (center) for certain purposes.

Sec. 155.003. ADMINISTRATION. (a) Requires the commission to administer the center.

(b) Requires the commission to appoint an advisory committee to advise the commission regarding the development of priorities, guidelines, and procedures for the implementation of this chapter. Sets forth entities that must be represented on the advisory committee.

(c) Authorizes the commission and advisory committee to cooperate, coordinate, and share information with a governmental entity or postsecondary educational institution in another state that borders the Gulf of Mexico.

(d) Requires the commission, in consultation with the advisory committee, to adopt guidelines and procedures for the administration of this chapter.

Sec. 155.004. CONTRACT. Requires the commission to contract with a private postsecondary educational institution that meets certain criteria to the extent funding is available and for certain purposes related to the center.

Sec. 155.005. FUNDING. (a) Authorizes the commission to receive state-appropriated funds for the purpose of supporting the activities of the center.

(b) Authorizes the commission to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations for purposes of this chapter.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.