

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1208
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Government Organization
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Increasing access to food results in new jobs, wages, and tax revenues that stimulate local economic activity and social cohesion in neighborhoods. This bill helps to develop recommendations to inform systemic development of Texas's regional food economy.

S.B. 1208 creates a regional food system task force to examine how the development of Texas's regional food economy can improve access to healthy food for all Texans. It brings together a distinct set of nine appointed stakeholders into the regional food economy discussion, representing financing and economic development, large and small-scale farming, food retail, food advocacy, food access programming, academia, and state agriculture agencies.

Accordingly, the focus of the proposed task force will be to enhance the development of the food economy, specifically by creating and retaining family-wage jobs; expanding export and local markets for regional products; leveraging existing public, private, and nonprofit efforts and partnerships; and improving access to healthy food and food security, protecting natural resources, and expanding community connections.

As proposed, S.B. 1208 amends current law relating to the creation of a regional food economy and food access task force.

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. REGIONAL FOOD ECONOMY AND FOOD ACCESS TASK FORCE. (a) Creates the regional food economy and food access task force (task force) to study and provide recommendations to the legislature on developing this state's regional food economy and improving access to healthy food for the people in this state.

(b) Provides that the task force consists of nine members appointed as follows:

- (1) one member who is a representative of the food retail industry with experience in grocery stores, appointed by the governor;
- (2) one member who is a representative of the food retail industry with experience in convenience stores, appointed by the governor;
- (3) one member who is a representative of a community development financial institution, appointed by the governor;
- (4) one member who is a large-scale farmer, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(5) one member who is a small-scale farmer, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, with experience in farmers markets, appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(6) one member who is a representative of a food bank, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(7) one member who is a representative of a regional food advocacy group, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(8) one representative of the Texas Department of Agriculture, appointed by the commissioner of agriculture; and

(9) one representative of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, appointed by the chancellor of The Texas A&M University System.

(c) Provides that the representative of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service serves as the presiding officer of the task force.

(d) Provides that a task force member is not entitled to compensation or reimbursement of expenses.

(e) Requires the task force to:

(1) examine the following food economy goals: creating and retaining family-wage jobs; expanding export and local markets for regional products; developing regional public-private partnerships and leveraging existing public-private partnership efforts; and improving access to healthy food and food security, protecting natural resources, and enhancing community connections; and

(2) develop recommendations for legislation and state agency programming that will improve this state's regional food economy and improve access to healthy food for the people in this state.

(f) Requires the task force to meet not later than the 30th day after the date the last initial appointment is made. Requires the task force to meet regularly as necessary at the call of the presiding officer.

(g) Requires the task force, not later than September 1, 2014, to:

(1) submit to the legislature a report outlining legislative recommendations and recommendations for state agency programming; and

(2) provide a presentation on the task force's recommendations to the standing committee of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over economic development.

SECTION 2. EXPIRATION. Provides that the task force established under this Act is abolished and this Act expires September 1, 2015.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.