

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
87R2477 MCF-F

S.B. 239  
By: Powell  
Health & Human Services  
3/19/2021  
As Filed

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

S.B. 239 will help to ensure that there is a comprehensive and organized process for the dissemination of information on immunizations during a disaster.

Public health emergency preparedness and response is critical in the pre- and post- recovery periods of severe weather or manmade disasters. With over 250 declared disasters since 1953, this is particularly key in Texas. In the event of a disaster, it is vital that immunization information be readily available so the public can take precautions to prevent or mitigate disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes the importance of current immunizations in the event of displacement, and emphasizes the need for vaccines to reduce the likelihood of outbreaks of preventable illnesses among crowds.

Disasters like Hurricane Harvey and the COVID-19 pandemic are just a few recent examples that underscore where an organized information dissemination process would have been instrumental.

S.B. 239 directs the Department of State Health Services to create a system to provide immunization information and make immunization awareness materials available for local health authorities during a disaster.

As proposed, S.B. 239 amends current law relating to the provision of educational materials regarding disease prevention during a disaster.

### **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 Subchapter H, Chapter 418, Government Code, by adding Section 418.1861, as follows:

Sec. 418.1861. DISEASE PREVENTION INFORMATION SYSTEM. (a) Requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to develop and implement a disease prevention information system for dissemination of immunization information during a declared state of disaster or local state of disaster.

(b) Requires DSHS, during a declared state of disaster or local state of disaster, to ensure that educational materials regarding immunizations are available to local health authorities in Texas for distribution to public schools, child-care facilities as defined by Section 42.002 (Definitions), Human Resources Code, and community centers offering youth services and programs.

(c) Requires that the educational materials include the most recent immunization schedules by age as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and locations, if any, of local health care providers that offer immunizations.

SECTION 2. Requires DSHS, as soon as practicable, but not later than August 31, 2022, to implement the disease prevention information system as required by Section 418.1861, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.