

**SUBJECT:** Allowing Fort Bend County to use drones for disaster preparedness

**COMMITTEE:** State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 12 ayes — Phelan, Deshotel, Guerra, Harless, Holland, Hunter, P. King, Parker, Raymond, E. Rodriguez, Smithee, Springer

0 nays

1 absent — Hernandez

**WITNESSES:** For — Rodney Grimmer, Fort Bend County; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Doug Barnes and Jim Short, Fort Bend County)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jim Baxa)

On — Jordan Gross, DJI Technology

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 423.002 lists certain circumstances under which it is lawful to capture an image using an unmanned aircraft, including for law enforcement purposes, surveying the scene or a catastrophe or other damage, and mapping purposes.

Some have suggested allowing Fort Bend County to use drone technology both during a disaster and in disaster preparation to meet its responsibility to inspect, maintain, or repair infrastructure efficiently and safely.

**DIGEST:** HB 2912 would expand the lawful use of an unmanned aircraft to include capturing an image for the purpose of disaster preparedness, including for the inspection, maintenance, or repair of public infrastructure by a county with a population of 550,000 or more that was adjacent to a county with a population of 3.3 million or more (Fort Bend County).

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.