

# Commission on State Emergency Communications

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## Summary

The Commission on State Emergency Communications (Commission) contracts with the 24 Regional Planning Commissions to provide 911 service to about one third of Texans, mostly in rural areas. The Commission's role is limited to the delivery of emergency calls and does not include the answering of the call or dispatch of emergency services. Emergency Communications Districts and Municipal Emergency Communications Districts provide 911 service to the rest of the state. The Commission also administers the Texas Poison Control Network by funding and overseeing the six regional poison control centers. These centers provide treatment information through a toll-free number (1-800-222-1222) to persons suspecting a poisoning or toxic exposure.

House Bill 1861 continues the Commission on State Emergency Communications for 12 years and clarifies its authority regarding development and implementation of the State's evolving emergency communications system. The Legislature adopted all of the Sunset Commission's recommendations, and a discussion of the bill's major provisions follows.

## Sunset Provision

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### **1. Continue the Commission on State Emergency Communications and provide adequate tools to help the Commission oversee the State's evolving emergency communications system.**

House Bill 1861 authorizes the Commission, with the assistance of an advisory committee, to coordinate the development, implementation, and management of an interconnected, state-level emergency services Internet Protocol network. The bill defines this network as one that is used for communications between and among entities that provide emergency call handling and response, and that will be a part of the Texas Next Generation Emergency Communications System.

If the Commission exercises this authority, H.B. 1861 requires the Commission to establish policy and oversee agency involvement in the development and implementation of the network, and to appoint an advisory committee. The advisory committee must include at least one representative from each of the three 911 entities in the state, including Regional Planning Commissions, Emergency Communications Districts, and Municipal Emergency Communications Districts. The bill also requires the Commission to consult with Regional Planning Commissions and Emergency Communications Districts throughout the state when appointing these members, and to ensure each member has appropriate training, experience, and knowledge in 911 systems and network management to assist in the implementation and operation of a complex network.

Finally, the bill continues the Commission as an independent agency responsible for the provision of 911 and poison control services for 12 years, and applies the standard Sunset across-the-board requirements to the Commission regarding negotiated rulemaking and alternative dispute resolution.

## **Fiscal Implication Summary**

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House Bill 1861 will not have a fiscal impact to the State.