
**Housing, Community Development &
Veterans Committee**

HB 1147

Brief Description: Concerning access of broadcasters to a geographic area subject to the declaration of a national, state, or local emergency.

Sponsors: Representatives Chapman, Klippert and Goodman.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the seizure or confiscation of a first informer broadcaster's vehicles, fuel, food, water, or other essential materials brought into an area affected by an emergency or disaster, except as otherwise authorized by law.
- Specifies that federal, state, and local agencies are not liable for any action, or failure to act, when facilitating access of a first informer broadcaster to an area affected by an emergency or disaster.

Hearing Date: 1/23/19

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

The Governor may proclaim a state of emergency after finding that a public disorder, disaster, energy emergency, or riot exists within the state that affects life, health, property, or public peace. An emergency proclamation enables the Governor to prohibit specific activities, such as public gatherings, transfer of combustible materials, public possession of firearms, sale or purchase of alcohol, and the use of public streets. The Governor may also prohibit other activities as he or she reasonably believes necessary to help preserve and maintain life, health, property, or the public peace, and may waive or suspend specified statutory obligations and limitations.

The Governor and the executive heads of the political subdivisions of the state, in order or carry out their emergency management duties, are directed to utilize, to the maximum extent

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practicable, the services, equipment, supplies, and facilities of existing departments, offices, agencies of the state, political subdivisions, and all municipal corporations. The officers and personnel of all departments, offices, and agencies are directed to cooperate with and extend services and facilities to the Governor and to the emergency management organizations of the state upon request.

The Governor, the chief executive of counties, cities, and towns, and the emergency management directors of local political subdivisions, in the event of a disaster and after proclamation by the Governor of the existence of such disaster, have the power to command the service and equipment of as many citizens as are considered necessary in the light of the disaster proclaimed.

Summary of Bill:

"Broadcaster" means a person or entity that holds a license issued by the federal communications commission. "First informer broadcaster" means an individual who:

- is employed by, or acting pursuant to a contract under the direction of, a broadcaster; and
- maintains, including repairing or resupplying, transmitters, generators, or other essential equipment at a broadcast station or facility; or provides technical support services to broadcasters needed during a period of a proclaimed emergency.

A vehicle, fuel, food, water, or other essential materials brought into an emergency or disaster area by a first informer broadcaster may not be seized or confiscated, except as otherwise authorized by law.

Federal, state, and local agencies, and their employees, are not liable for any action, or failure to act, when facilitating access of a first informer broadcaster to an area affected by an emergency or disaster.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2019.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.