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Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

**2017 Interim Legislative Charges:
Hurricane Harvey Response**

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Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs Committee

- Study and make recommendations on how to move forward with water infrastructure projects in the State Water Plan that will help mitigate floods through flood control, diversion, and storage projects. Evaluate plans for a possible third reservoir in addition to Addicks and Barker to control and alleviate additional flooding in the region. Additionally, review the current status of reservoir projects in Texas. Examine opportunities for coordination between federal and state agencies to develop flood mitigation infrastructure, and the ongoing maintenance and restoration of critical dam infrastructure.
- Study and identify ways to improve the capacity and maintain the structure of the Addicks and Barker Reservoirs. Report on mechanisms that would ensure the public has access to timely and transparent release figures from reservoirs across the state.
- Evaluate current state data-sharing standards for rainfall and stream gauges and whether regional flood management projects and flood warnings should be hosted in a centralized location, such as a state agency web page. Determine whether a statewide real-time flood warning system could be developed and coordinated through mobile devices, TxDOT electronic signage, communication devices and whether existing local and regional forecasting infrastructure could be integrated into a centralized inclement weather forecasting system.

Business and Commerce Committee

- Study infrastructure security and energy restoration post weather events. Identify ways state government entities can help utilities more effectively stage pre-hurricane mobilization crews for managing resources before an event.
- Examine state mortgage requirements regarding the notification of homebuyers on their need for flood insurance in flood plains and flood pool areas and make recommendations on how to better inform consumers.
- Examine local government regulations, including occupational licenses, as related to Hurricane Harvey and determine if any are a detriment to rebuilding efforts.
- Examine and make recommendations on the need for changes to the Texas Constitution for home equity lenders to offer various forms of relief to Texas homeowners affected by natural disasters including, among others, the authority to enter into deferment agreements. This examination should include a study of home equity rules regarding negotiation, modification and refinancing and

whether constitutionally established time periods can be waived in times of disasters.

Education Committee

- Assess and make recommendations for state and local K-12 hurricane recovery efforts. Examine the crisis management response of the Texas Education Agency and identify changes to the Education Code that would expedite the state response to school districts and public charter schools in the aftermath of any disaster.
- Determine the impact on school finance of possible state actions such as, but not limited to, changes to student enrollment calculations or property valuation. Assess student displacement caused by Hurricane Harvey and consider actions the Commissioner of Education may take to adjust attendance levels or calculations in the wake of a disaster. Make recommendations for legislative action including potential changes to the process and timeliness of payments to districts by private insurers, FEMA and the state.

Finance Committee

- Monitor all funds currently being used to address Hurricane Harvey relief and recovery. Identify ways to maximize the use of federal funds and ensure the efficient use of state funds.
- Evaluate the long-term impact of Hurricane Harvey on the Texas economy and the gulf coast region.

Select Senate Committee on Government Reform

- Evaluate how property tax law could better advance disaster recovery after Hurricane Harvey while ensuring that taxpayers are protected from excessive taxation and wasteful spending.
- Study the statutory changes necessary, if any, for a municipality to be able to redirect revenue from Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) for a set period of time to assist in paying the costs associated with recovery and rebuilding necessary infrastructure following a disaster declaration by the Governor or President.

Health and Human Services Committee

- Review the state's response to Hurricane Harvey with a focus on public health efforts at the local and state level. The review should include an analysis of the state and local response related to vector control, immunization needs, utilization of health-related volunteers, adequacy of an emergency medical network,

evacuation of vulnerable populations from state operated or regulated facilities, and coordination between all levels of government. Recommend any legislative changes necessary to improve public health response and coordination during and after a disaster.

- Evaluate the impact of Hurricane Harvey on the capacity of out-of-home placements and care for youth involved with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Determine how the state can ensure support is available to provide appropriate care as close to home as possible as facilities and offices are rebuilt.
- Evaluate the efficiency of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Disaster-SNAP programs following Hurricane Harvey in impacted areas.

Intergovernmental Relations Committee

- Examine and report on ways to improve the coordination of rebuilding housing and infrastructure following a natural disaster, including evaluating additional cost effective options for FEMA to utilize in providing direct housing assistance immediately following a disaster, creation of comprehensive lists of housing opportunities or web portals to disseminate information to survivors, ways to automatically waive local government regulations to facilitate rebuilding, and additional local resources available for rebuilding efforts.
- Monitor the distribution of federal disaster relief funds related to housing and infrastructure, including community development block grant (CDBG) funds, to ensure the timely dissemination of monies by state entities to local governments for reconstruction efforts. Develop recommendations for any statutory changes necessary to improve the efficiency of disaster recovery efforts, maximize housing and infrastructure funds, and ensure cooperation between private and government partners.
- Review and recommend options to expedite debris removal, including cutting unnecessary regulation and streamlining the process.
- Identify and report on existing disaster training opportunities available for local officials and make recommendations for training programs that equip them to efficiently interact with state and federal agencies during times of disaster.

State Affairs Committee

- Review the interaction between federal, state, and local agencies in charge of responding to natural disasters. Examine emergency situation operations, including evacuation routes and procedures, and the efficient use of Disaster Recovery Centers. Make recommendations to ensure emergency management

officials have the tools and authority necessary to promptly and appropriately respond to disaster areas and alert citizens to potential threats.

- Study and make recommendations on the benefit of the state maintaining a single, web-based source of comprehensive information that outlines the State Emergency Operations during times of disaster.
- Review the Attorney General's efforts related to price-gouging and identify existing issues with current law, if any, that could be remedied to further protect Texans during times of disaster.
- Review laws related to looting crimes. Examine whether current penalties and enhancements are sufficient to deter looting crimes during a disaster.

Transportation Committee

- Study the impact of Hurricane Harvey on the state's transportation infrastructure and make recommendations on how best to rebuild assets efficiently and effectively.