

1 AN ACT

2 relating to the establishment and operation of a severe storm  
3 research and planning center.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Subtitle H, Title 3, Education Code, is amended  
6 by adding Chapter 155 to read as follows:

7 CHAPTER 155. SEVERE STORM RESEARCH AND PLANNING CENTER

8 Sec. 155.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

9 (1) "Center" means the severe storm research and  
10 planning center.

11 (2) "Commission" means the regional planning  
12 commission, council of governments, or similar regional planning  
13 agency created under Chapter 391, Local Government Code, whose  
14 membership includes the most populous county that borders on the  
15 Gulf of Mexico or on a bay or inlet of the Gulf of Mexico.

16 Sec. 155.002. ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE. The commission shall  
17 create a severe storm research and planning center to facilitate  
18 research and develop plans, programs, and technology associated  
19 with the impact of and response to hurricanes and other severe  
20 storms in the Gulf Coast Region and adjacent areas, including:

21 (1) the development of real-time storm surge  
22 forecasting ability for hurricanes and other severe storms;

23 (2) the development of radar-based rainfall and flood  
24 warning systems for urban and coastal areas;

1           (3) the development of public education programs  
2 relating to compliance with government-initiated evacuation  
3 orders;

4           (4) the assessment of infrastructure risks; and

5           (5) the development of evacuation plans.

6           Sec. 155.003. ADMINISTRATION. (a) The commission shall  
7 administer the center.

8           (b) The commission shall appoint an advisory committee to  
9 advise the commission regarding the development of priorities,  
10 guidelines, and procedures for the implementation of this chapter.

11 The advisory committee must include representatives of:

12           (1) Rice University;

13           (2) the University of Houston;

14           (3) The University of Texas at Austin;

15           (4) Texas A&M University;

16           (5) Texas A&M University at Galveston;

17           (6) Texas Southern University;

18           (7) The University of Texas at Brownsville;

19           (8) regional planning commissions, councils of  
20 governments, or similar regional planning agencies created under  
21 Chapter 391, Local Government Code, whose membership includes a  
22 municipality or county located in the Gulf Coast Region;

23           (9) engineering and construction firms associated  
24 with public works contracts; and

25           (10) the medical profession in a major urban area  
26 located in the Gulf Coast Region.

27           (c) The commission and advisory committee may cooperate,

1 coordinate, and share information with a governmental entity or  
2 postsecondary educational institution in another state that  
3 borders the Gulf of Mexico.

4 (d) The commission, in consultation with the advisory  
5 committee, shall adopt guidelines and procedures for the  
6 administration of this chapter.

7 Sec. 155.004. CONTRACT. To the extent funding is available  
8 and for the purpose of operating, managing, and providing services  
9 or facilities for the center, the commission shall contract with a  
10 private postsecondary educational institution that:

11 (1) is a member of the Association of American  
12 Universities;

13 (2) has an enrollment of at least 3,000 students; and

14 (3) is located in a municipality in the Gulf Coast  
15 Region with a population of 1.8 million or more.

16 Sec. 155.005. FUNDING. (a) The commission may receive  
17 state-appropriated funds for the purpose of supporting the  
18 activities of the center.

19 (b) The commission may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and  
20 donations for purposes of this chapter.

21 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

David Buehner

President of the Senate

Jim Caddick

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1493 was passed by the House on May 9, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Robert Haney  
Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1493 was passed by the Senate on May 23, 2007, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Letsy Law  
Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: 15 JUN 07

Date

Rick Perry

Governor

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
5 PM O'CLOCK

Roger Winnie  
Secretary of State