



CITY OF HOUSTON

Office of the Mayor

Interoffice

Correspondence

To: Houston City Council

From: Mayor's Office of Government Relations

Date: February 5, 2019

Subject: Update to Council

Harvey Advocacy Update

On Monday, January 28th, the Texas House Appropriations Committee met for the first time. Chief Nim Kidd of the Texas Department of Emergency Management outlined state expenditures in the wake of Hurricane Harvey and discussed the local support.

Chief Kidd discussed the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) totaling \$1.1 billion statewide. These are for projects within the Texas Division of Emergency Management, with \$500 million available for approved projects that could include elevating flood prone structures; retrofitting property to reduce wind, flood, and fire damage; and local flood control initiatives.

Selected Federal Disaster Grants

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

The General Land Office has been awarded \$10.1 billion in CDBG-DR funds for Hurricane Harvey as follows:

- \$57.8 million: Fully awarded. State Action Plan, amendment 2 approved by HUD on November 19, 2018 (\$54.3 million in work authorized, \$3.265 million paid)
- \$5,024.9 million (Round 1): State Action Plan, amendment 1 approved by HUD on December 11, 2018 (\$194.5 million in work authorized, \$6.3 million paid)
- \$5,035.2 million (Round 2): Of these funds, \$652 million is allocated for to rebuild damaged homes and infrastructure; \$4.3 billion for mitigation.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

FEMA awarded \$1.1 billion in HMGP funds to the Texas Division of Emergency Management, with \$500 million available immediately for approved projects that could include elevating flood-prone structures; retrofitting property to reduce wind, flood, and fire damage; and local flood control initiatives.

The Governor previously announced that the state would utilize \$180 million of the award for voluntary buyouts for approximately 900 flood-prone homes in Harris County. The grant covers 75% of project costs. While local governments typically provide the other 25%, CDBG-DR funds may be used to cover the local cost share for eligible projects.

The grant covers 75% of project costs. While local governments typically provide the other 25%, the City of Houston and Harris County are asking the state to provide up to \$300 million to draw down \$800 million in federal funds (for a total of \$1.1 billion statewide). This is in addition to the request for the state to cover the local match for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) from the Economic Stabilization Fund (ESF). For that request, the state can pull down \$9 billion in federal matching funds for \$1 billion in Rainy Day dollars. The total request for Local Matching Funds is \$1.3 billion to help pull down \$9.8 billion in federal monies.

Also, of note, Chief Kidd presented a slide entitled “State Funding Assistance for State and Local Entities – Trusted Programs within the Office of the Governor” that outlines state support for local governments. The slide is reproduced below.

State Funding Assistance for State and Local Entities Trusted Programs within the Office of the Governor

Funds Transferred (in millions)	Method of Finance	Agency or Local Entity	Funds transferred from Trusted Programs at the Office of the Governor, Strategy A.1.1, Disaster Funds, for the purposes of:
\$12.9	General Revenue	Military Department	Reimburse the agency for costs from activating the National Guard. The agency was provided \$12.9 million and has repaid \$6.5 million following receipt of FEMA Public Assistance.
\$10.0	General Revenue	Department of Public Safety	Reimburse the agency for response costs incurred by Texas Division of Emergency Management. The agency has repaid \$10 million.
\$30.0	Economic Stabilization Funds	Military Department	Reimburse the agency for costs from activating the National Guard. The agency was provided \$30 million and has repaid \$21.7 million following receipt of FEMA Public Assistance.
\$50.0	Economic Stabilization Funds	City of Houston	The state granted the funds to assist the City with response and recovery from Hurricane Harvey.
\$10.0	Economic Stabilization Funds	General Land Office	For immediate costs for administering the FEMA Short-term Housing Program.
\$26.7	Economic Stabilization Funds	Department of Public Safety	Cover the state matching funds required for the FEMA Transitional Shelter Assistance Program. The agency has repaid \$26.7 million.
Total: \$139.6			

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It should be noted that out of this \$139.6 million, almost half (46.5%) has been repaid totaling \$64.9 million.

To see the most updated Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation updates from the City of Houston, check out our Hurricane Harvey Progress Report Update online at http://www.houstontx.gov/postharvey/public/documents/11.28.2018_progress_report_updated.pdf

Houston Area Committee Chairs

Senate Committees



The Dean of the Texas Senate, Senator John Whitmire, will once again Chair the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. Brenham Senator Lois Kolkhorst will head the Senate’s Health and Human Services Committee for the first time, while Houston’s Senator Joan Huffman will once again chair the Senate State Affairs Committee. Friendswood Senator Larry Taylor will also chair the Senate’s Education Committee while Conroe’s Senator Brandon Creighton will chair the Senate’s Higher Education Committee. Senator Paul Bettencourt will chair a new standing committee called Property Tax Committee.

Senate Finance

From the Houston area, Senators Paul Bettencourt, Joan Huffman, Lois Kolkhorst, Larry Taylor, and John Whitmire all serve on the 15 member Senate Finance Committee.

House Committees

Representative Garnet Coleman will continue to chair the House County Affairs Committee, Rep. Harold Dutton will chair Juvenile Justice & Family Issues, Rep. Jim Murphy will chair Pensions, Investments, & Financial Services. Once again, Rep. Dan Huberty will chair Public Education while Rep. Senfronia Thompson will chair Public Health.



House Appropriations



The Texas House Appropriations Committee will once again be led by Richmond Representative John Zerwas. This is the second session Chairman Zerwas has lead the Appropriations Committee. His committee includes other Houstonians including Rep. Sarah Davis, Rep. Jarvis Johnson, Rep. Armando Walle, and Rep. Gene Wu. Additionally, League City Rep. Dr. Greg Bonnen, Magnolia Rep. Cecil Bell, Sugarland Rep. Rick Miller, and Montgomery County Rep. Steven Toth are on the 27 member committee.

Celebratory Gunfire

The first council session of 2019 generated a great deal of commentary from our members regarding the gunfire and fireworks all Houstonians were subjected to on New Year's Eve. Most of our council members were justifiably concerned about the noise and the danger of this unfortunate tradition. We hope you will consider joining Mayor Turner in signing a letter of support for House Bill 86.

HB 86 will make it a Class A misdemeanor to discharge a weapon without an intended target, and would make it a first-degree felony if the gunfire resulted in serious bodily injury or death.

At present, there is no state law that specifically addresses celebratory gunfire. It is subject to a patchwork of local laws that deal with the reckless discharge of a weapon. One only needs to witness the endless eruption of gunfire on holiday evenings to know that irresponsible gun owners are disregarding these local laws.

The Government Relations team has prepared a support letter in the form of written testimony for House Bill 86 and would like to invite Council Members to sign on. Please contact Nick Anderson at 832.393.1080 or email at nick.anderson@houstontx.gov to add your signature to our support letter.

City of Houston Priorities

The table below reflects priority legislation for the City that has been filed to date.

	Author	Subject	Progress
SB 493	Sen. Alvarado	<u>Two Mile Rule:</u> Relating to the allocation of housing tax credits to developments within proximate geographical areas.	Filed 1/28/19
SB 492	Sen. Alvarado	<u>Preservation Appraisals:</u> Relating to the application of the limit on appraised value of a residence homestead for ad valorem tax purposes to an improvement that is a replacement structure.	Filed 1/28/19
SB 417	Sen. Miles	<u>Concrete Batch Plants:</u> relating to concrete batching and concrete crushing facilities.	Filed 1/23/19
SB 335	Sen. West, Miles, etc.	<u>Community Land Trust:</u> relating to community land trusts.	Filed 1/11/19
HB 1113	Rep. Davis	<u>Human Trafficking Grants:</u> relating to state contract limitations and programs for sex trafficking prevention and victim treatment.	Filed 1/28/2019
HB 86	Rep. Martinez	<u>Celebratory Gunfire:</u> creating a new state statute regarding use of a firearm.	Filed 11/12/18