

SCS HCS HB 185 -- AMBER ALERT

This bill creates the Amber Alert System to aid in the identification and location of abducted persons. An abducted person is one whose whereabouts are unknown and who is reasonably believed to be a victim of kidnaping. The Department of Public Safety will develop regions within the state and coordinate the program with local law enforcement agencies and broadcasters in each region. Participation in the system is optional for local law enforcement agencies and federally licensed radio and television broadcasters. If a local law enforcement agency decides not to participate and an abduction occurs in the jurisdiction, the local agency will notify the department, which will notify local media in the region.

The bill requires the system to include all state agencies capable of providing information to the public, as well as broadcasters and other entities who volunteer to disseminate urgent public information. The department has the authority to notify other regions upon verification that the criteria established by the Amber Alert System Oversight Committee have been met.

The Amber Alert System Oversight Committee is established within the department to develop criteria and procedures for the system. The bill specifies the members of the oversight committee.