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SB-397 Public transit operators: passengers with pets: evacuation orders. (2019-2020)

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Senate Bill No. 397

CHAPTER 702

An act to add Section 99166 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to transit operators.

[Approved by Governor October 09, 2019. Filed with Secretary of State October 09, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 397, Glazer. Public transit operators: passengers with pets: evacuation orders.

Existing law imposes various requirements on transit operators. Existing law prohibits a person from doing any of specified acts with respect to the property, facilities, or vehicles of a transit district, including, among other things, interfering with the operator or operation of a transit vehicle, or impeding the safe boarding or alighting of passengers.

This bill would require the Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with public transit operators and county emergency management officials, to develop best practices for allowing pets on public transit vehicles serving areas subject to an evacuation order. If an evacuation order that covers all or a portion of a public transit operator's service area is issued, the bill would require the operator to authorize passengers to board public transit vehicles with their pets in the area covered by the evacuation order, consistent with those best practices. By creating new duties for public transit operators, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 99166 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

99166. (a) If an evacuation order is issued that covers all or a portion of a public transit operator's service area, the public transit operator shall authorize passengers to board public transit vehicles with their pets in the area covered by the evacuation order, consistent with best practices developed pursuant to subdivision (b).

(b) The Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with public transit operators and county emergency management officials, shall develop best practices for allowing pets on public transit vehicles serving

areas subject to an evacuation order. The best practices shall not prohibit a public transit operator from enacting policies that ensure the safety of transit riders.

(c) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Evacuation order" means an order from the Governor, or a county emergency management official, county sheriff, chief of police, or fire marshal, under which persons subject to the order are encouraged to relocate outside of the geographic area covered by the order due to an imminent danger resulting from an earthquake, fire, flood, riot, or other natural or manmade disaster.

(2) "Pet" means a cat or a dog as those terms are defined in Section 1799.109 of the Health and Safety Code.

SEC. 2. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.