

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas Pollinator-Smart program for solar energy sites.

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

SECTION 1. The heading to Subchapter K, Chapter 88, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION [~~SERVICE~~]

SECTION 2. Section 88.821, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 88.821. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "AgriLife Extension" or "extension service" means [~~the~~] Texas A&M AgriLife Extension [~~Service~~].

SECTION 3. Subchapter K, Chapter 88, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 88.824 to read as follows:

Sec. 88.824. TEXAS POLLINATOR-SMART PROGRAM. (a) AgriLife Extension, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the Parks and Wildlife Department, shall establish and implement the Texas Pollinator-Smart program to encourage the voluntary establishment and conservation of habitats for bees, birds, and other pollinators in and near solar energy sites.

(b) AgriLife Extension, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the Parks and Wildlife Department, shall develop educational materials for the program that include information regarding:

1 (1) benefits to solar energy producers, neighboring
2 landowners, agricultural producers, and the environment of
3 providing pollinator habitats at solar energy sites;

4 (2) resources and practices for establishing and
5 maintaining pollinator habitats;

6 (3) native plant species compatible with solar energy
7 sites that provide habitat for pollinators;

8 (4) methods to prevent, identify, and eradicate
9 invasive species without causing harm to pollinators;

10 (5) any available grants or other financial incentives
11 for establishing or maintaining pollinator habitats;

12 (6) examples of pollinator habitats established at
13 solar energy sites in this state or other locations; and

14 (7) the Texas Pollinator-Smart certificate under
15 Subsection (c).

16 (c) AgriLife Extension shall, in consultation with the
17 Department of Agriculture and the Parks and Wildlife Department,
18 award the Texas Pollinator-Smart certificate to solar energy sites
19 with pollinator habitats that meet or achieve a standard determined
20 by AgriLife Extension.

21 (d) AgriLife Extension may provide advice and technical
22 assistance to participants and potential participants in the Texas
23 Pollinator-Smart program, including reports evaluating the
24 suitability of solar energy sites.

25 (e) Participation in the Texas Pollinator-Smart program by
26 a solar energy site is voluntary.

27 SECTION 4. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is required to

1 implement a provision of this Act only if the legislature
2 appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the
3 legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that
4 purpose, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension may, but is not required to,
5 implement a provision of this Act using other appropriations
6 available for that purpose.

7 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1772 passed the Senate on May 3, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 29, Nays 1; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 29, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1772 passed the House, with amendment, on May 26, 2021, by the following vote: Yeas 109, Nays 38, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor