

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1594
By: West, George "Buddy"
Energy Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, Section 117, Natural Resources Code contains requirements for community liaison activities between pipeline operators and local officials. House Bill 1594 amends provisions passed in the 77th Legislative Session concerning the steps a pipeline operator must go through to provide safety related information to local fire, police, and public emergency response officials. Personal meetings with those local officials are preferred. However, if those local officials do not respond to invitations for personal meetings, then the statute provides for other alternatives.

In current statute, there are specific provisions requiring pipeline operators who have hazardous lines within 1,000 feet of a school to all attend the first annual school board budget meeting for the district in which that school is located and present their emergency response plans.

House Bill 1594 would amend the requirement that all pipeline operators attend the first budget meeting. It would instead specify the emergency response information which must be sent to a school board, upon request of the school board.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: This section makes it clear that the pipeline operator must take only one of three steps listed to arrange a personal meeting with local officials. If that does not work, the operator has to take only one of three listed steps to arrange a telephone conference. If attempts fail, then the operator can mail the information.

SECTION 2: If an operator has a hazardous liquids pipeline within 1,000 feet of a public school, it must give the school board, upon request, the following pieces of its emergency response plan:

1. A description and a map of the pipeline facilities within 1,000 feet of a school;
2. A list of the products transported in the segment;
3. The emergency number for the pipeline facility operator
4. Information on the state on call system;
5. Information on how to recognize, report, and respond to product release.

The copies of the required items are to be sent to the school superintendent by certified mail.

If the school board requests it, the operator must attend a regularly scheduled board meeting to discuss the information provided.

Security sensitive information may be reviewed by a school board but does not have to be released to the public.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

CSHB 1594 adds provisions regarding what steps operators must take to arrange a personal meeting with local officials.

CSHB 1594 adds provisions regarding emergency response plans.

CSHB 1594 sets forth required items to be sent to the school superintendent by certified mail.

CSHB 1594 requires operators to attend regularly scheduled board meeting to discuss the information provided.

CSHB 1594 authorizes the school board to review security sensitive information, and the school board does not have to be released to the public.

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