

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3468  
By: Geren  
Corrections  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Agribusiness Division of our prison system manages more than 145,000 acres in 46 counties in Texas. The division raises cotton, alfalfa, and more than 30 varieties of edible crops. The Agribusiness program produces as much as possible of the food and fiber requirements of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. It also provides valuable job skills training for inmates.

Obviously, an inherent element of agriculture is water. Water is among this state's most valuable resources. Texas has developed nearly 80% of its dependable water supplies, but our population is expected to double in the next 40 years. This state is prone to drought conditions. Because of this, we have taken steps to increase water awareness and encourage conservation. Texas passed SB 1 and SB 2 to facilitate regional water planning. We have established the Texas Drought Preparedness Council. Cities have instituted watering schedules during dry summer months. All of these actions have helped raise awareness regarding the use of water.

When drought conditions are so severe that the Governor declares a state of disaster, all Texans should examine their use of water, and the state should lead the way. This bill does not force TDCJ to abandon or change any of their irrigation plans. It merely requires TDCJ, during a declared state of disaster due to drought conditions, to examine its use of water for irrigation to insure they are making the best use of this precious resource.

### **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**

HB 3468 amends Section 497.112 of the Government Code by adding subsection (d) to require the Texas Department of Criminal Justice institutional division to review the use of water in irrigation channels on prison land during a state of disaster due to drought conditions as declared by the Governor pursuant to Section 418.014, Government Code.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2003

