

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3567
By: Cook, Robby
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Coastal Bend Groundwater Conservation District was created and confirmed by the voters of Wharton County in 2001 to manage the groundwater resources of Wharton County. Neighbors in adjoining counties have approached the Coastal Bend Groundwater Conservation District about adding territory to the Coastal Bend District. The board members of Coastal Bend are elected along the county precincts lines in Wharton County. If territory were added, the board wants to have a mechanism to offer equal representation for the newly added area. C.S.H.B. 3567 provides the district with a more equitable method of electing directors.

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

C.S.H.B. 3567 provides that if the district annexes territory, the board of directors of the district by resolution may add one or more directors as provided by Section 36.051, Water Code.

C.S.H.B. 3567 outlines the procedures the board should follow if the district annexes territory, including the procedures for electing directors, the re-drawing of district boundaries, and maintaining staggered terms for the directors. The bill also provides that if the board votes to add a director to represent annexed territory, the board may include the names of candidates on the ballot. The bill also provides for methods of electing directors and eligibility requirements. Finally, the bill allows the board to revise the voting districts as necessary or appropriate.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2003

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 3567 allows the directors of the district to add directors as provided by Section 36.051, Water Code, and the bill as filed provided the district with a method of re-drawing five, single-member districts for the purpose of electing directors. The substitute also provides that if the district annexes territory, the board is instructed to adopt an appropriate and equitable method for electing directors, drawing district boundaries and maintaining staggered terms.

C.S.H.B. 3567 also allows the directors to hold the annexation election at the same time as the director election for the new area as a cost saving measure for the district. The original bill required the board to revise the voting district as necessary and after each federal decennial census, which is the same in the committee substitute. The substitute adds that, if the district boundaries change, the director can serve out the remainder of the term of office.

