

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1996
By: Hunter
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, the Wes-Tex Groundwater Conservation District, located entirely in Nolan County, must re-elect all eight of its directors each time that the county commissioners' precincts are redrawn because the directors are also elected by the designated precincts. The law states that the election of the directors must occur in the May after the redrawing occurs. The process of holding an election in May is costly. House bill 1996 allows the current directors of the Groundwater District to remain in their positions after a redrawing of the precinct boundaries until the end of their terms. The bill will also allow for the election of the directors to occur at the same time as the county commissioners' elections in November of even-numbered years. This will help ensure a greater voter turnout for the Groundwater District and save the taxpayers of Nolan County money that would be spent on duplicate elections.

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

H.B. 1996 will amend Section 9(e), Chapter 1473, Acts of 77th Legislature, to allow the directors of the Wes-Tex Groundwater Conservation District to serve the remainder of their terms after the county commissioners' precincts have been redrawn, even if the directors no longer reside in the precinct that they represent.

The bill will change the election date of directors from May of even-numbered years to November of even-numbered years, which will be the same date that the county commissioners' elections occur. In addition, the bill removes the requirement that each precinct has one director from an incorporated area and one from an unincorporated area.

The bill adds Section 11A to require that directors of Precincts 2 and 4 be elected in November 2006 and serve four-year terms. The at-large director and directors of Precincts 1 and 3 will be elected in November 2008 and will serve four-year terms.

In addition, the bill provides that the terms of the directors elected from precincts 2 and 4 serving on the effective date of this Act expire December 1, 2006. The terms of the directors of the district at-large and precincts 1 and 3 serving on the effective date of this Act expire December 1, 2008.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Immediately upon a two-thirds vote in each house, or if the requisite vote is not received September 1, 2005.