

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2129
By: Bonnen
Environmental Regulation
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Many of the state's efforts at improving air quality have focused on industry. There are cost-effective measures homeowners and businesses can take to improve air quality. There are a number of organizations throughout the state with the expertise to develop residential and commercial energy efficiency programs that could clean the air and save consumers money. Air quality improvements achieved through energy efficiency can be claimed under the State Implementation Plan. C.S.H.B. 2129 directs the A&M Energy Systems Laboratory, the State Energy Conservation Office, and certain utilities to research consumer-oriented efficiency and air quality improvement options.

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. 2129 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the A&M Energy Systems Laboratory to develop at least three alternative methods for achieving a 15 percent greater potential energy savings in residential, commercial, and industrial construction than the potential energy savings of construction that is in minimum compliance Texas Building Energy Performance Standards.

The bill amends the Government Code to require the state energy conservation office to determine the feasibility and cost-benefit to consumers of setting appliance standards for appliances that are not currently regulated for energy efficiency in this state, if the office determines that the new standards would reduce the emission of air contaminants. The bill prohibits the state energy conservation office from considering the feasibility and cost-benefit to consumers of setting appliance standards for air-conditioning systems.

The bill amends the Utilities Code to require certain utilities to consider establishing customer-option programs that encourage the reduction of air contaminant emissions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2005

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The substitute prohibits the state energy conservation office from considering the feasibility and cost-benefit to consumers of setting appliance standards for air-conditioning systems under the appliance standards provisions. The substitute amends the list of customer-option programs that encourage the reduction of air contaminant emissions to include high-efficiency building distribution transformers rather than lighting transformers.