

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 8, 2007

TO: Honorable Kip Averitt, Chair, Senate Committee on Natural Resources

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1656 by Puente (Relating to regulation of irrigation systems and irrigators.), **As Engrossed**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend the Occupations Code to require a person who inspects an irrigation system for a municipality or water district to be licensed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The bill would add Section 49.238 to the Water Code to authorize a district created by either Sections 52(b)(1) and (2), Article III, or Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, to adopt and enforce rules for regulating installers of irrigation systems and to charge an installer a fee to cover costs of obtaining or renewing a permit. A district would also be authorized to employ or contract with a licensed plumbing inspector, licensed irrigation inspector, the district's operator, or another governmental entity to enforce the district's regulatory rules.

The bill would add Section 401.006 to the Water Code to require a municipality with a population of 20,000 or more by ordinance to require an installer of irrigation systems to hold a license and to obtain a permit before installing a system within the territorial limits or extraterritorial jurisdiction of the municipality. The municipality would be authorized to charge an installer a fee to cover the costs of obtaining or renewing a permit. A municipality would also be authorized to employ or contract with a licensed plumbing inspector or a licensed irrigation inspector to enforce the ordinance.

The bill would take effect immediately if it were to receive the required two-thirds vote in each house; otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

Implementing provisions of the bill would require TCEQ to implement a new licensing program, which would include creating or approving a training curriculum and baseline inspector requirements; adding a new occupational license; and making changes to rules, forms, license application procedures, and database structures. The agency estimates that the revenue generated from issuing licenses and the costs associated with implementing a new licensing program would not be significant.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 582 Commission on Environmental Quality

LBB Staff: JOB, DB, WK