

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**

**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**April 17, 2007**

**TO:** Honorable Dennis Bonnen, Chair, House Committee on Environmental Regulation

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

**IN RE: HB1695** by Hilderbran (Relating to the powers and duties of the Office of Public Utility Counsel. ), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

**No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.**

This bill would amend the Water Code relating to powers and duties of the Office of Public Utility Counsel (OPUC). This bill would require OPUC to take certain actions relating to the interests of residential and small commercial consumers concerning water or sewer issues, which were previously the responsibility of the Office of Public Interest Counsel within the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The bill would require that on Jan. 1, 2008, the Office of Public Interest Counsel be abolished, and the functions, powers, duties, property, records, contracts and funds of the Office of Public Interest Counsel related to the provisions of this bill be transferred to OPUC. The bill would also transfer \$488,157 in fiscal year 2008 and \$482,957 in fiscal year 2009 appropriated to TCEQ by the 80th Legislature, Regular Session, relating to the provisions of this bill, to OPUC.

Based on the analysis of TCEQ, it is assumed that the appropriation transfer to OPUC from TCEQ would be made out of Water Resource Management Account No. 153 appropriations made to TCEQ for the 2008-09 biennium.. Based on the analysis of OPUC, it is assumed that implementing the provisions of this bill would require 5.0 additional FTEs at OPUC. For the purposes of this analysis, it is also assumed that necessary FTEs would be transferred from TCEQ to OPUC.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2007.

**Local Government Impact**

No fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 475 Office of Public Utility Counsel, 582 Commission on Environmental Quality

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