

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 8, 2007

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

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

IN RE: SB1341 by Hegar (Relating to the management of groundwater in the area regulated by the Edwards Aquifer Authority and to the operations and oversight of the Edwards Aquifer Authority.), **As Introduced**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would extend the deadlines for pumping reductions in the Edwards Aquifer.

The bill would require the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas to develop a program of water management practices, procedures, and methods jointly with the Edwards Aquifer Authority, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Agriculture, and the Texas Water Development Board. Development of the program would require a consensus-based process that includes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and various specified, as well as general, stakeholders of the Edwards Aquifer.

The joint group formed by provisions of the bill would be required to submit two reports to the Edwards Aquifer Legislative Oversight Committee, the first by no later than January 1, 2008 and the second by January 1, 2012.

The joint group would also be required to prepare a cooperative agreement with various federal agencies to ensure protection of endangered species associate with the Edwards Aquifer. The agreement would have to be approved and executed by no later than January 1, 2012 and take effect by no later than December 31, 2012.

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.

Based on information provided by the affected state agencies, it is assumed that implementation of provisions of the bill could be absorbed within existing resources.

Local Government Impact

The fiscal impact to stakeholders in the Edwards Aquifer as a result of changing pumping deadlines is not expected to be significant. The fiscal impact to local governments within the boundaries of the Edwards Aquifer Authority may experience additional costs related to implementing a water management program; however, not knowing what that program will entail, an estimate is not possible at this time; however, the fiscal implication to units of local government is not anticipated to be significant.

Source Agencies: 551 Department of Agriculture, 580 Water Development Board, 582 Commission on Environmental Quality, 720 The University of Texas System Administration, 802 Parks and Wildlife Department

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