

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1666  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

A state with a vast agricultural and forest industry, Texas has the potential to become a major biofuel feedstock producer. Biofuels, particularly cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel, hold substantial promise for supplying a significant portion of the nation's future vehicle fuel. Texas possesses key factors, including a large agricultural industry, a broad, multi-sectored energy industry, and major research universities actively researching critically needed cellulosic energy breakthroughs. Thoughtful planning of the state's role as a biofuel leader will require a consortium of political leadership, university representation and research collaboration, energy industry and agricultural expertise and efforts to maximize federal funding.

Texas is already a leader in wind power, agriculture, and natural gas production. By evolving as a leader in alternative feedstock development, the state would position itself as the leader in renewable energy for years to come. Bioenergy has huge implications for economic development and energy independence.

As proposed, S.B. 1666 establishes the Bioenergy Policy Council and the Bioenergy Research Committee to encourage the responsible development of bioenergy resources in this state and provide a roadmap for Texas to become a significant part of the renewable energy industry by 2019.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Title 3, Agriculture Code, by adding Chapter 50D, as follows:

#### **CHAPTER 50D. BIOENERGY POLICY COUNCIL; RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Sec. 50D.001. PURPOSE. Provides that the purpose of this chapter is to make cellulosic biofuels a significant part of the energy industry by 2019.

Sec. 50D.002. DEFINITIONS. Defines "policy council" and "research committee."

Sec. 50D.003. BIOENERGY POLICY COUNCIL. (a) Provides that this Bioenergy Policy Council (council) is composed of 16 certain members.

(b) Provides that appointed members for the council serve two-year terms.

Sec. 50D.004. DUTIES OF THE POLICY COUNCIL. Requires the council to provide a vision for unifying the state's agricultural, energy, and research strengths in a successful launch of cellulosic biofuel industry; foster development of cellulosic-based fuels and build on the Texas emerging technology fund's investments in leading-edge cellulosic energy research and efforts to commercialize production of algae-based biodiesel; pursue the creation of a fourth energy biofuels research program at a university in the state and work to draw federal funding that will aid the state in becoming a bioenergy leader; and perform other advisory duties as requested by the commissioner of agriculture

(commissioner) regarding the responsible development of bioenergy resources in the state.

(b) Requires the council to meet regularly as necessary at the call of the commissioner.

Sec. 50D.005. REIMBURSEMENT; ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. (a) Prohibits a member of the council from receiving compensation for service on the council but entitles the member to reimbursement of the actual and necessary expenses incurred while conducting the business of the council, as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

(b) Requires the Texas Department of Agriculture to provide administrative support, including staff, to the council. Authorizes the commissioner to allocate administrative support to the bioenergy research committee (committee) as appropriate.

Sec. 50D.006. BIOENERGY RESEARCH COMMITTEE. (a) Provides that the committee is composed of 16 certain members.

(b) Provides that appointed members of the committee serve staggered two-year terms.

Sec. 50D.007. PURPOSES AND DUTIES OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE. (a) Provides that the committee is a research consortium with academic research leadership and active involvement by all sectors of the economy interested in biofuel development.

(b) Requires the committee to identify and research desirable biomass feedstock, which may vary by geographic region and may range from trees and forestry residues to perennial grasses, bioenergy forage sorghum, sugarcane, and algae; investigate logistical challenges to the planting, harvesting, and transporting of large volumes of biomass and provide recommendation to the council that will aid in overcoming barriers to the transporting, disturbing, and marketing of biofuels; provide a roadmap for the potential transition of the agriculture industry in western regions to dryland bioenergy crops that are not dependent on groundwater resources; explore regions in the state, including coastal areas, that may have marginal land available for growing bioenergy feedstocks; and perform other research duties as requested by the commissioner regarding the responsible development of bioenergy resource in the state.

(c) Requires the committee to meet at the call of the commissioner.

Sec. 50D.008. REIMBURSEMENT. Prohibits a member of the committee from receiving compensation for service on the committee but entitles the member to reimbursement of the actual and necessary expenses incurred while conducting the business of the committee, as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 2. (a) Requires that appointments to the council and the committee under Chapter 50D, Agriculture Code, as added by this Act, be made as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

(b) Requires the council to meet not later than the 30th day after the date of the initial appointments made to the council under Section 50D.003, Agriculture Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.