

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1271  
By: Morrison  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Lavaca-Navidad River Authority (LNRA), formerly known as the Jackson County Flood Control District, is a conservation and reclamation district coextensive with the boundaries of Jackson County. LNRA was created for the purpose of controlling, storing, preserving, and distributing the waters of Jackson County for all useful and beneficial purposes. LNRA presently owns, operates, and maintains Lake Texana and the surrounding lands and recreation facilities. In addition, LNRA works with other entities in the community to coordinate the maintenance and construction of drainage structures, disposal of wastewater, flood and emergency planning, and law enforcement.

While LNRA is engaged in many important public purposes and governmental functions, it does not currently have the authority to participate and partner with other local governmental entities and nonprofit organizations in community development and economic development projects. H.B. 1271 would authorize LNRA to establish an economic development program and match its resources with those from other local groups in order to achieve common goals.

### **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**

H.B. 1271 amends Chapter 186, Acts of the 50th Legislature, Regular Session, 1947, to authorize the board of directors of the Lavaca-Navidad River Authority (district) to establish by formal action an economic development program within the territorial boundaries of the district or the district's water service area. The bill requires the board to establish the goals of the program, impose requirements on persons participating in or receiving a benefit from the program, and provide restrictions, procedures, and budget limits the board determines are necessary to ensure that the governmental purposes of the bill's provisions and the program are achieved. The bill specifies that a determination by the board that the program is intended and expected to accomplish the program's stated purposes is conclusive with respect to whether the program serves the purposes established under the bill's provisions.

H.B. 1271 authorizes an economic development program established by the board to involve the granting or lending of money, services, or property to a person engaged in an economic development activity. The bill authorizes the district to employ staff and to spend its resources, other than money received from a property tax or a general appropriation, to further a program and to apply for and receive money, grants, or other assistance from any source to implement a program. The bill authorizes the district and any public or private person to enter into an agreement with respect to a program. The bill requires the district, on proposing to provide scholarships, grants, loans, or financial assistance to a public fire-fighting organization, to adopt guidelines for determining eligibility for the assistance; the amount of any loan, grant, or other assistance the district may provide; and the types of equipment, facilities, education, or training

for which the assistance may be used. The bill specifies that the legislature finds that the programs authorized by the bill's provisions are a specific public purpose and governmental function of the district in accordance with the Texas Constitution. The bill defines "economic development program."

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2011.