

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 683
By: Huffman
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In 1965, the Texas Legislature created the Galveston County Water Authority (authority) to provide an adequate water supply for municipal, domestic, manufacturing, irrigation, and other useful purposes for the inhabitants and water users of Galveston County. Since its creation, the authority has grown in both capacity and customer base, and the authority no longer supplies water to just the citizens, municipalities, and industries of Galveston County. Today, approximately 40 percent of the authority's total contracted water volume is from outside Galveston County, in Brazoria and Fort Bend counties.

In September 1991, the name of the authority was changed to the Gulf Coast Water Authority (GCWA). It was felt that the name change would allow better relations with other entities in Brazoria and Fort Bend counties.

The GCWA is managed and controlled by a board of directors consisting of seven board members, all of whom are appointed by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County. S.B. 683 adds two members to the board of directors of GCWA, bringing the total number of board members to nine. One new member would be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Brazoria County and one new member would be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County.

In 1996, the GCWA committed, in writing, to add these two voting members to the board. S.B. 683 simply ensures that that commitment is honored.

S.B. 683 amends current law relating to the composition of the board of directors of the Gulf Coast Water Authority.

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

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 5 and 5(a), Chapter 712, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, as follows:

Sec. 5. Provides that the management and control of the Gulf Coast Water Authority (district) is hereby vested in a Board of nine, rather than seven, directors. Requires the seven directors appointed by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County to represent the geographic and ethnic diversity of the county. Requires vacancies on the board of directors, whether by death, resignation or termination of the term of office, to be filled by appointment by the commissioners court that appointed the director, rather than by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County. Requires that all terms of office be for a period of two years. Requires that the terms be staggered. Requires three of the members appointed by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County to be registered professional engineers under the laws of Texas. Deletes existing text providing that the terms of three directors expire one year and the terms of four directors expire the next year.

Sec 5(a). Requires one director of the district to be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County upon the recommendation of the City Council of the City of Galveston. Requires six of the remaining, rather than the remaining six, directors to be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Galveston County with two directors appointed at-large and the remaining four of those directors appointed on the written recommendation of advisory committees appointed by the board of directors of the Gulf Coast Water Authority. Makes conforming changes.

Provides that the Industrial Advisory Committee is composed of one representative of each industrial customer of the Gulf Coast Water Authority. Provides that the Mainland Municipal Advisory Committee is composed of one representative of each municipal or water district customer of the Gulf Coast Water Authority that contracts for, rather than uses, not less than two million gallons of water a day. Requires the names of the representatives of each of the committees to be submitted to the Board of Directors of the Gulf Coast Water Authority by the respective industrial and municipal or water district customers. Requires the directors of the Gulf Coast Water Authority to submit the names of the advisory committee members to the Commissioners Court of Galveston County, which must record the names in the minutes of the court.

Requires one director to be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County to represent district customers in that county. Requires the director to be recommended by one or more of those customers and reside in that county.

Requires one director to be appointed by the Commissioners Court of Brazoria County to represent district customers in that county. Requires the director to be recommended by one or more of those customers and reside in that county.

SECTION 2. Provides that all requirements of the constitution and laws of this state and the rules and procedures of the legislature with respect to the notice, introduction, and passage of this Act are fulfilled and accomplished.

SECTION 3. Provides for the effective date of this Act.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act takes effect September 1, 2011.