

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1840
By: Nichols
Special Purpose Districts
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that the lack of a groundwater conservation district in Sabine, San Augustine, and Shelby Counties hinders efforts to keep a sustainable approach to manage the local groundwater and that elected officials in each of these counties believe this is a potential problem as future water use demands increase. S.B. 1840 seeks to address this concern by providing for the creation of the Deep East Texas Groundwater Conservation District in order to establish the region's ability to manage, protect, and preserve the local aquifers.

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

S.B. 1840 amends the Special District Local Laws Code to create the Deep East Texas Groundwater Conservation District. The bill dissolves the district on September 1, 2015, if the creation of the district is not confirmed at a confirmation election before such date. The bill, among other provisions, provides for the addition of an adjacent county to the district, a permit to transfer groundwater, and the refund of certain permit fees.

S.B. 1840 prohibits the district from purchasing groundwater rights for any purpose, from producing groundwater for the purpose of sale, from requiring that a meter be placed on a well that is incapable of producing more than 25,000 gallons of groundwater per day, and from exercising the power of eminent domain. The bill caps the rate of property taxes that the district may impose at five cents on each \$100 valuation of taxable property in the district.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.