

By: Callegari

H.B. No. 841

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas Center for Innovative Desalination Technology at the University of Houston in partnership with The University of Texas at El Paso.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 111, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TEXAS CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE

DESALINATION TECHNOLOGY

Sec. 111.131. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Board" means the board of regents of the University of Houston System.

(2) "Center" means the Texas Center for Innovative Desalination Technology established under this subchapter.

Sec. 111.132. ESTABLISHMENT. (a) The Texas Center for Innovative Desalination Technology is established as a joint partnership of the University of Houston and The University of Texas at El Paso.

(b) The organization, control, and management of the center are vested in the board.

(c) The center shall operate through the University of Houston's College of Engineering and The University of Texas at El Paso's Center for Inland Desalination Systems. Participation in the center's activities shall be open to any faculty member of

1 either university who is an active researcher in the field of water
2 desalination, engineering, hydrology, biology, water supply
3 development, or energy efficiency or another relevant field as
4 determined by the board.

5 Sec. 111.133. PURPOSE. The center is created to:

6 (1) promote interdisciplinary research, education,
7 and training for the development of state-of-the-art products,
8 materials, systems, and technologies designed for the desalination
9 of seawater from the Gulf of Mexico and brackish water within
10 surface and groundwater resources throughout the state; and

11 (2) develop cost-effective, energy-efficient, and
12 environmentally sound water desalination, brine disposal, and
13 water conveyance technologies that can enhance the potential for
14 desalinated water to contribute toward the state's long-term water
15 portfolio.

16 Sec. 111.134. POWERS AND DUTIES. The center shall:

17 (1) collaborate with appropriate international,
18 federal, state, and local agencies and private business or
19 nonprofit entities as necessary to develop innovative desalination
20 technologies;

21 (2) research and develop innovative seawater and
22 brackish water desalination technologies, including pretreatment
23 technologies and improvements, that:

24 (A) are energy efficient and cost effective;

25 (B) minimize environmental impacts; and

26 (C) offer long-term water supply solutions for
27 the state;

1 (3) research and develop brine disposal methods and
2 technologies;

3 (4) research and develop water conveyance systems and
4 technologies that may be used to transport desalinated water to
5 target use populations;

6 (5) develop test facilities for evaluating the
7 performance of new products, materials, or techniques;

8 (6) develop specifications and standards for products
9 used for desalinating water, conveying water, and disposing of
10 brine;

11 (7) provide public information, education, and
12 outreach regarding desalination technologies and appropriate uses
13 and conservation methods for desalinated water; and

14 (8) provide data, recommendations, and any other
15 information necessary relating to desalination for local,
16 regional, or statewide water planning programs and processes.

17 Sec. 111.135. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES. The
18 University of Houston and The University of Texas at El Paso shall
19 encourage public, private, and nonprofit entities to participate in
20 or support the operation of the center and may enter into an
21 agreement with any public, private, or nonprofit entity for that
22 purpose. An agreement may allow the center to provide information,
23 services, or other assistance to an entity in exchange for the
24 entity's participation or support.

25 Sec. 111.136. GIFTS AND GRANTS. The board may solicit,
26 accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private
27 source for the purposes of this subchapter.

1 Sec. 111.137. PERSONNEL. The board may employ personnel
2 for the center as the board considers necessary.

3 Sec. 111.138. EXPIRATION. This subchapter expires
4 September 1, 2023.

5 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
6 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
7 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
8 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
9 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.