

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1088  
By: Márquez  
Natural Resources  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Interested parties note that El Paso is home to the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, reportedly the largest inland desalination plant in the nation, and that both The University of Texas at El Paso and The University of Texas at San Antonio have research entities that conduct desalination research. The parties contend that a joint effort between UT El Paso and UT San Antonio would help to further desalination research. H.B. 1088 seeks to address this need by providing for the establishment of the Texas Technical Center for Innovative Desalination.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **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. 1088 amends the Education Code to establish the Texas Technical Center for Innovative Desalination as a joint partnership of The University of Texas at El Paso and The University of Texas at San Antonio. The bill vests the organization, control, and management of the center in the board of regents of The University of Texas System and requires UT El Paso to administer the programs of the center. The bill requires the center to operate through UT El Paso's College of Engineering and UT San Antonio's College of Engineering and requires participation in the center's activities to be open to any faculty member of either university who is an active researcher in the field of water desalination, engineering, hydrology, biology, water supply development, energy efficiency, materials management, or another relevant field as determined by the board.

H.B. 1088 sets out the center's purpose and required powers and duties as they relate to the development and research of water desalination technology. The bill requires UT El Paso and UT San Antonio to encourage public, private, and nonprofit entities to participate in or support the operation of the center, authorizes the universities to enter into an agreement with any such entity for that purpose, and establishes that such an agreement may allow the center to provide assistance to an entity in exchange for the entity's participation or support. The bill requires the center to solicit active participation by researchers at other universities and laboratories for the center's purposes. The bill requires the board to solicit, accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private source for the center's purposes and authorizes the board to employ personnel for the center as the board considers necessary.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.