

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1232
By: Lucio III
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that, due to ongoing drought, surface conditions across the state have worsened and have tightened available surface water supplies and that the lack of such supplies available to meet our state's growing water demands has put pressure on many groundwater supplies. Although much research has been done to explore the availability of fresh and brackish groundwater resources, the parties contend that much more information is needed about the interaction of these groundwater supplies. C.S.H.B. 1232 seeks to address this issue.

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

C.S.H.B. 1232 requires the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to conduct a study of the hydrology and geology of the confined and unconfined aquifers in Texas to determine the quality and quantity of groundwater in those aquifers, specifically regarding the salinity of those aquifers; whether those aquifers are tributary or non-tributary; the contribution of those aquifers to any surface flow of any water in Texas; the contribution of those aquifers to any other aquifer in Texas; and the suitability of those aquifers for the disposal of concentrate from desalination facilities through the use of injection wells. The bill requires the TWDB, in conducting the study, to produce a map that identifies the area and water quality of the confined and unconfined aquifers in Texas, a map that identifies which aquifers are tributary and which are non-tributary, a report on the contribution of those aquifers to any other aquifer in Texas, and a report on the suitability of those aquifers for the disposal of concentrate from desalination facilities through the use of injection wells. The bill requires the TWDB, before conducting the study, to determine the minimum rate at which an aquifer must contribute to another aquifer in Texas or to the surface flow of any water in Texas in order to be included in the study and determine the definition of "suitability" for certain purposes of the study.

C.S.H.B. 1232 requires the TWDB, not later than December 31, 2016, to report the results of the study to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the standing committees of the senate and the house of representatives that have jurisdiction over natural resources.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1232 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. The Texas Water Development Board shall conduct a study to define the quality and quantity of groundwater in this state in confined and unconfined aquifers.

In conducting the study, the board shall produce a map that shows the area and water quality of confined and unconfined groundwater aquifers.

SECTION 2. Not later than December 31, 2016, the Texas Water Development Board

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. (a) The Texas Water Development Board shall conduct a study of the hydrology and geology of the confined and unconfined aquifers in this state to determine:

- (1) the quality and quantity of groundwater in those aquifers, specifically regarding the salinity of those aquifers;
- (2) whether those aquifers are tributary or non-tributary;
- (3) the contribution of those aquifers to any surface flow of any water in this state;
- (4) the contribution of those aquifers to any other aquifer in this state; and
- (5) the suitability of those aquifers for the disposal of concentrate from desalination facilities through the use of injection wells.

(b) In conducting the study, the board shall produce:

- (1) a map that identifies the area and water quality of the confined and unconfined aquifers in this state;
- (2) a map that identifies which aquifers are tributary and which are non-tributary;
- (3) a report on the contribution of those aquifers to any other aquifer in this state; and
- (4) a report on the suitability of those aquifers for the disposal of concentrate from desalination facilities through the use of injection wells.

(c) Before conducting the study, the board shall determine:

- (1) the minimum rate at which an aquifer must contribute to another aquifer in this state or to the surface flow of any water in this state in order to be included in the study; and
- (2) the definition of "suitability" for the purposes of Subsection (a)(5) of this section.

SECTION 2. Substantially the same as introduced version.

shall report the results of the study conducted under this Act to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the standing committees in the senate and the house of representatives that have jurisdiction over natural resources.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.