

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., *Chairman*
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*
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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

May 4, 2017

The Honorable Joe Straus
Texas House of Representatives
Capitol Station
PO Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Re: Responsibility of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Pursuant to Article XVI, Section 59(d), Texas Constitution

House Bill (HB) 4317, as Filed by Representative Ernest Bailes - Relating to the creation of River Ranch Improvement District of Liberty County; providing authority to issue bonds; providing authority to impose assessments, fees, or taxes.

Dear Speaker Straus:

The following comments are provided pursuant to the Constitutional requirements referenced above. Under those requirements, the TCEQ must submit, to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House of Representatives, the TCEQ's recommendations on specific legislation affecting water districts. We recommend that these comments be considered in the evaluation of the proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cari-Michel LaCaille".

Cari-Michel LaCaille, Director
Water Supply Division

cc: Honorable Jim Murphy, Chairman, House Special Purpose Districts Committee
Representative Ernest Bailes, Texas House of Representatives

Enclosure

**HB 4317, as Filed by Representative Ernest Bailes
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's Comments**

The Legislative Budget Board, in cooperation with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), has determined that:

This bill amends the Special District Local Laws Code by adding Chapter 3948 which creates the River Ranch Improvement District of Liberty County (District) with the powers and duties of a standard municipal management district under Local Government Code Chapter 375.

Comments on Powers/Duties Different from Similar Types of Districts: The District is governed by a board of nine voting directors appointed by the TCEQ from persons recommended by the board; the District may exercise the powers given to a development corporation; the board by resolution may authorize the creation of a nonprofit corporation to assist and act for the District in implementing a project or providing a service authorized by this chapter; the District may contract with a qualified party, including the county or the city, to provide law enforcement services in the District for a fee; the District may join and pay dues to a charitable or nonprofit organization that performs a service or provides an activity consistent with the furtherance of a District purpose; the District may engage in activities that accomplish the economic development purposes of the District; the District may acquire, lease as lessor or lessee, construct, develop, own, operate, and maintain parking facilities or a system of parking facilities, including lots, garages, parking terminals, or other structures or accommodations for parking motor vehicles off the streets and related appurtenances; the bill grants the District authority for road projects; the District has the powers provided by the general law of this state applicable to navigation districts created under Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, including Chapters 60 and 62, Water Code; the District may construct, acquire, improve, maintain, and operate rail facilities and improvements in aid of those facilities; the District may provide and coordinate rural public transportation in its territory in the manner provided by Sections 458.010 and 458.011, Transportation Code, for a rural transit district; the District may annex and exclude land as provided by Subchapter J, Chapter 49, Water Code; the District may not exercise the power of eminent domain; Local Government Code Section 375.161 states that an MMD may not impose an impact fee, assessment, tax,

or other requirement for payment, construction, alteration, or dedication under this chapter on single-family detached residential property, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. The bill specifies that this section does not apply to the District; Sections 375.221 and 375.223, Local Government Code, relating to competitive bidding, do not apply to the District. The bill specifies that Subchapter I, Chapter 49, Water Code, relating to competitive bidding applies to the district; Local Government Code Section 375.243 states that the board may not call a bond election unless a written petition has been filed with the board requesting an election. The bill specifies that this section does not apply to the District; Section 49.107(h), Water Code states that an operation and maintenance tax to be used for recreational facilities, as defined by Section 49.462, Water Code, levied by a district located in a county with a population of more than 3.3 million or in a county adjacent to that county may not exceed 10 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation of taxable property in the District. The bill specifies that this section does not apply to the District; and, the District may define areas or designate certain property of the District to pay for improvements, facilities, or services that primarily benefit that area or property and do not generally and directly benefit the District as a whole.

Overlapping Services: TCEQ does not have mapping information for water and/or wastewater providers because this function was transferred from the TCEQ to the Public Utility Commission on September 1, 2014. As a result, TCEQ is unaware of possible overlapping service providers.

TCEQ's Supervision: As with general law districts, the TCEQ will have general supervisory authority, including bond review authority and review of financial reports.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF TEXAS

HB 4317

Bill Number

TO: The Honorable Governor of Texas
SUBJECT: A Bill Relating to a Conservation and Reclamation District

This is to transmit to you and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality copies of a bill relating to a conservation and reclamation district and copies of the notice of intention to introduce the bill. One copy is for your files and one for you to forward to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, under Section 59(d), Article XVI, Constitution of the State of Texas.

4/7/2017

Date transmitted to
Governor's Office


Chief Clerk
House of Representatives

TO: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
SUBJECT: A Bill Relating to a Conservation and Reclamation District

This is to forward to you a copy of a bill relating to conservation and reclamation district and a copy of the notice of intention to introduce the bill.

April 7, 2017

Date transmitted to
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality


Governor

TO: The Honorable Speaker of the House
The Honorable President of the Senate
The Honorable Governor of Texas
SUBJECT: A Bill Relating to a Conservation and Reclamation District

Attached are recommendations of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in compliance with Section 59(d), Article XVI, Constitution of the State of Texas.


Texas Commission on Environmental Quality



85R HB 04317