

Jon Niermann, *Chairman*
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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

May 1, 2019

The Honorable Dennis Bonnen
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) 4702, as Filed by Representative Will Metcalf - Relating to the creation of the Montgomery County Municipal Utility District No. 179; granting a limited power of eminent domain; providing authority to issue bonds; providing authority to impose assessments, fees, and taxes.

Dear Speaker Bonnen:

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,


Cari-Michel La Caille, Director
Water Supply Division

cc: Honorable Tom Craddick, Chairman, House Land & Resource Management Committee
Representative Will Metcalf, Texas House of Representatives

Enclosure

**HB 4702, as Filed by Representative Will Metcalf
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 creates Montgomery County Municipal Utility District No. 179 (District) with the powers and duties of a standard municipal utility district under Water Code Chapters 49 and 54.

Comments on Powers/Duties Different from Similar Types of Districts:

The District must receive consent to the creation of the District from each municipality in whose corporate limits or extraterritorial jurisdiction the District is located prior to holding a confirmation election; the bill requires the TCEQ to appoint the five initial temporary directors upon receipt of a petition from the owners of a majority of the assessed value of the real property in the District; the bill grants the District authority for road projects; the bill specifies that the District has the power to purchase, construct, acquire, own, operate, maintain, improve, or extend, inside or outside the District, a canal or other waterway, bulkhead, dock, or improvement in aid of such canals, waterways, bulkheads, or docks; the bill specifies that at the time of issuance, the total principal amount of bonds or other obligations issued or incurred to finance road projects and payable from ad valorem taxes may not exceed one-fourth of the assessed value of real property in the District; and if the bill does not receive a two-thirds vote of all members elected to each house, the District may not exercise the power of eminent domain.

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.

