

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 520
By: Campbell
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that certain changes are needed to allow specific utilities to efficiently manage their treated surface water and groundwater by storing certain excess water in certain portions of the Edwards Aquifer. S.B. 520 seeks to address this issue by setting out provisions relating to the storage and recovery of water in a portion of the aquifer.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 520 amends Chapter 626, Acts of the 73rd Legislature, Regular Session, 1993, to entitle a political subdivision causing artificial recharge of a portion of the Edwards Aquifer that contains groundwater with a total dissolved solids concentration of more than 5,000 milligrams per liter to withdraw the measured amount of water actually injected or artificially recharged. The bill adds as a set of conditions under which the Edwards Aquifer Authority may contract with a political subdivision for injection or artificial recharge of the aquifer for subsequent retrieval, if provision is made for protecting and maintaining the quality of groundwater in the receiving part of the aquifer, the following set of conditions:

- the water is injected by a municipally owned utility owned by the City of New Braunfels;
- the water has a total dissolved solids concentration of less than 1,500 milligrams per liter and is not domestic wastewater, municipal wastewater, or reclaimed water as those terms are defined by certain provisions of the Texas Administrative Code effective October 31, 2018; and
- the injection well terminates in a portion of the aquifer that contains groundwater with a total dissolved solids concentration of more than 5,000 milligrams per liter.

S.B. 520 amends the Water Code to authorize the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality by rule to authorize injections of water made in accordance with the set of conditions added by the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.