

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1143
By: Ramos
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, freshwater sites in Texas are tested for certain pathogens an average of two to four times a year. This testing is conducted or supervised by regional water authorities and funded by wastewater permit fees. While the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality makes fresh water quality testing data available via the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Information System, this system is not accessible to the general public. There have been calls to publish the data from the monitoring program for the general public so the public may identify significant issues affecting water quality. H.B. 1143 seeks to address this issue by providing for the online publication of certain pathogen-related fresh water data.

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. 1143 amends the Water Code to require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to publish on its website data from available monitoring data and assessment results related to pathogens and pathogen indicators in lakes, bays, springs, rivers, streams, creeks, inlets, and other bodies of fresh water commonly used for swimming, fishing, or other recreation.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.