

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1154
By: Jetton
County Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Special purpose districts provide vital infrastructure to many Texas neighborhoods that may be paid for through bond debt and maintained through property and other taxes. Many Texans may be unaware that they live in one of these districts or do not know how to contact a district if there is an issue. Increased transparency can help educate Texans and remedy this disconnect. C.S.H.B. 1154 seeks to address this issue by requiring a special purpose district to post or cause to be posted on a website specified financial and operating information of the district.

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. 1154 amends the Government Code to require a special purpose district to post or cause to be posted on a website specified financial and operating information of the district. A district may satisfy all or part of this requirement by providing a link or reference on the district's website or another website to the same information required to be posted on another website by other law. For purposes of the bill's requirement, the bill does the following:

- defines "special purpose district" as a political subdivision of the state with geographic boundaries that define the subdivision's territorial jurisdiction and excludes from the term a municipality, county, junior college district, independent school district, or political subdivision with statewide jurisdiction; and
- makes the requirement applicable only to a special purpose district that has the following characteristics:
 - the district is authorized by the state by a general or special law to impose a property tax;
 - during the most recent fiscal year the district imposed a property tax;
 - during the most recent fiscal year the district had the following:
 - bonds outstanding;
 - gross receipts from operations, loans, taxes, or contributions in excess of \$250,000; or
 - cash and temporary investments in excess of \$250,000; and
 - at the beginning of the most recent fiscal year, the district had a population of 500 or more, as determined by the district's governing body.

The bill exempts a district subject to the bill's requirement from a statutory requirement that certain political subdivisions with taxing authority post on a publicly accessible website specified information regarding the political subdivision.

C.S.H.B. 1154 amends the Government Code and Water Code to do the following with respect to any website or websites a district uses to comply with the bill's online posting requirement of special purpose district information and a Tax Code online posting requirement of a taxing unit's tax rate and budget information:

- require the Special Purpose District Public Information Database to include the address of the respective website or websites for each district in the database that does not maintain a website;
- require the posting of links to the respective website or websites on a website that is maintained by the following districts that have a population of 500 or more:
 - water control and improvement districts;
 - fresh water supply districts;
 - municipal utility districts; and
 - water improvement districts; and
- provide for the inclusion of the respective website or websites in the district information statement on a customer's water bill from certain water districts that do not maintain a website.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 1154 differs from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways by conforming to certain bill drafting conventions.