

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas**

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 20, 2021

TO: Honorable Charles Perry, Chair, Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs

FROM: Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB2095 by Wilson (Relating to water research conducted by The University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology.), **As Engrossed**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB2095, As Engrossed : a negative impact of (\$5,691,843) through the biennium ending August 31, 2023.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five- Year Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</i>
2022	(\$2,818,950)
2023	(\$2,872,893)
2024	(\$2,876,840)
2025	(\$538,972)
2026	\$0

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund 1</i>	<i>Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2021</i>
2022	(\$2,818,950)	17.1
2023	(\$2,872,893)	17.1
2024	(\$2,876,840)	17.1
2025	(\$538,972)	2.9
2026	\$0	0.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would amend the Water Code relating to water research conducted by The University of Texas at Austin Bureau of Economic Geology. It would require the Bureau, in coordination with the Texas Water Development Board, to make studies of water, including surface water, groundwater, soil moisture, and atmospheric moisture, to improve on data gaps and on the processing, analysis, modeling, and integration of water-related data. It would require the Bureau, in coordination with the Board to work to enhance, advance, or integrate models characterizing the water resources of the state.

Methodology

The University of Texas at Austin currently receives non-formula item support from the state for three programs operated by the Bureau: 1) the Bureau of Economic Geology; 2) Project STARR; and the 3) TexNet Seismic Monitoring Program. The University of Texas at Austin indicates that the functions specified by the bill are not currently performed by the Bureau and would require additional resources and personnel to implement.

The Bureau of Economic Geology indicates that implementing a groundwater and surface water monitoring and modeling program would be comprised of three elements: 1) collating data and ensuring interoperability by various groups for data already collected across the state; 2) using the data to determine water volumes in groundwater and surface water; and 3) using the water volumes to estimate how much water is available for use by people as not all water can be extracted. The Bureau reports that an additional 17.1 FTEs, which includes 4.8 scientist FTEs, 1.5 post-doctoral/graduate student researcher FTEs, 7.6 contract workers and 3.2 administrative FTEs would be required. The total salaries of wages for these FTEs is estimated at \$2,037,392 per year. The total retirement benefits associated with these FTEs is estimated at \$662,560 per year. Other expenses, including travel, equipment and other materials, range from \$120,000 to \$180,000 per year. The Bureau of Economic Geology indicates that project would be completed within the first four months of fiscal year 2025 as reflected by the reduced costs in the table above.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 580 Water Development Board, 582 Commission on Environmental Quality, 710 Texas A&M Univ System Admin, 720 UT Sys Admin, 768 Texas Tech Univ Sys Admin

LBB Staff: JMc, AJL, JSM, GO