

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 12, 2021

TO: Honorable Tracy O. King, Chair, House Committee on Natural Resources

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 Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB2095, As Introduced : a negative impact of (\$6,024,540) 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	(\$3,012,270)
2023	(\$3,012,270)
2024	(\$3,012,270)
2025	(\$3,012,270)
2026	(\$3,012,270)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Probable Savings/(Cost) from General Revenue Fund</i>	<i>Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2021</i>
2022	(\$3,012,270)	24.5
2023	(\$3,012,270)	24.5
2024	(\$3,012,270)	24.5
2025	(\$3,012,270)	24.5
2026	(\$3,012,270)	24.5

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 to collect monitoring data related to surface water and groundwater. It would then require the Bureau to use the data collected to create a comprehensive modeling system of surface water and groundwater. It would also require the Bureau to make the results of the monitoring and models available to state agencies and institutions of higher education.

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 24.5 FTEs, which includes 5.5 scientist FTEs and 19 post-doctoral/graduate student researcher FTEs, would be required. The total salaries of wages for these FTEs is estimated at \$1,975,000 per year. The total retirement benefits associated with these FTEs is estimated at \$642,270 per year. Other expenses, including travel, equipment and other materials, total \$395,000 per year.

Local Government Impact

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

Source Agencies: 710 Texas A&M Univ System Admin, 720 UT Sys Admin, 768 Texas Tech Univ Sys Admin

LBB Staff: JMc, AJL, JSM, GO