

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1302  
By: Geren  
Energy Resources  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

State law currently authorizes the use of unmanned aircraft by the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) to capture images at the scene of a spill, or a suspected spill, of hazardous materials in connection with oil pipeline safety and rig protection, for the purposes of fire suppression, and with the consent of the landowner. However, there are concerns about the lack of any clear and explicit authority for RRC pipeline and surface inspectors to use unmanned aircraft for inspection purposes. H.B. 1302 seeks to resolve this issue by authorizing RRC to use unmanned aircraft to capture images in connection with the inspection and examination of an oil or gas site or facility, including a well, tank, or disposal or injection site, a pipeline facility, or a surface mining site.

### **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. 1302 amends the Government Code to authorize the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) or an RRC agent, servant, or employee to capture an image using an unmanned aircraft in Texas in connection with the inspection and examination of the following:

- an oil or gas site or facility, including a well, tank, or disposal or injection site;
- a pipeline facility; or
- a surface mining site.

H.B. 1302 amends the Natural Resources Code to specify that the requirement that the RRC have access at all times to the oil property of all persons for inspection and examination includes inspection and examination by unmanned aircraft.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.