

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 3881  
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Natural Resources  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to a news report by NBCDFW published in 2022, Kaufman County, Texas, is growing faster than any other county in the nation. Supporting this population growth are over a dozen special purpose districts, including rural area water districts. Current law does not prohibit a rural area water district from holding their board meetings and tax rate hearings outside of their jurisdictional boundaries. The author of the measure contends that, when a district holds meetings as far as 30 to 45 miles away from the district, it makes it inconvenient for the public to access and participate in their local government process. C.S.H.B. 3881 seeks to provide greater transparency to rural area water district residents in Kaufman County by making the proceedings of these meetings more accessible.

### **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. 3881 amends the Water Code to include a district wholly or partly located in a county with a population of more than 144,000 and less than 148,000 in the definition of "rural area district" for the purposes of a requirement for an applicable water district board, if the board at least meets quarterly, to conduct a meeting at least once per quarter at a designated meeting location inside the district, within 10 miles of the boundary of the district, or in the county in which the district is located, as applicable. The bill authorizes such a rural area district to satisfy the quarterly board meeting requirements by conducting those meetings by telephone conference call or videoconference call but requires a meeting to discuss the tax rate of the district to be conducted in person. The bill updates the definition of "rural area district" to reflect population criteria based on the 2020 Census.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.

### **COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 3881 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes provisions that were not in the introduced that provide for the following:

- a revision of the population criteria for the definition of "rural area district" by updating the criteria to be based on data from the 2020 Census; and
- the authority of the applicable rural area districts to conduct quarterly meetings by telephone conference call or videoconference call but requiring that a meeting to discuss the tax rate of the district be conducted in person.