

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R13699 MP-D

H.B. 4047
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The United States is highly reliant on uranium imports to supply its 92 nuclear power reactors, including the four reactors located in Texas. Most uranium used domestically is purchased from countries like Canada, Kazakhstan, and Australia, which is currently cheaper than mining domestically. However, importing uranium leaves the nuclear power industry vulnerable to global supply chain shocks and reliance on Russia, which is another major importer to the United States. It has been questioned whether Texas could help reduce national reliance on imported uranium. Uranium mining in South Texas is ongoing but the area still has untapped uranium deposits. If these deposits were comprehensively studied, subsidized, and exploited, they could help the nation become more energy independent and help boost the state's economy. H.B. 4047 seeks to address this issue by requiring the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to conduct a study on the uranium deposits in Texas and how utilizing those deposits could lessen the United States' reliance on foreign sources of uranium.

H.B. 4047 amends current law relating to a study on uranium deposits in this state.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. DEFINITION. Defines "commission."

SECTION 2. STUDY ON URANIUM DEPOSITS IN THIS STATE. Requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to conduct a study on the uranium deposits in this state and how utilizing those deposits could lessen the United States' reliance on foreign sources of uranium.

SECTION 3. REPORT. Requires TCEQ, not later than December 1, 2024, to submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives a report that includes the findings of the study and any recommendations for legislative or other action. Requires that the report include recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes and potential economic incentive programs to support the uranium mining industry in this state.

SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. Provides that this Act expires January 1, 2025.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.