

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R30324 MP-D

C.S.H.B. 4047
By: Guillen (Zaffirini)
Natural Resources & Economic Development
5/19/2023
Committee Report (Substituted)

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.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

Generally, C.S.S.B. 4047 differs from H.B. 4047 originally in that it would include an evaluation of public health and safety considerations pertaining to the state's uranium mining industry.

C.S.H.B. 4047 amends current law relating to a study on the potential for utilization of the 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 POTENTIAL FOR UTILIZATION OF URANIUM DEPOSITS IN THIS STATE. Requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to conduct a comprehensive study on the uranium deposits in this state, evaluating the economic benefits of utilizing those deposits to lessen the United States' reliance on foreign sources of uranium while prioritizing public health and safety. Requires that the study:

- (1) assess the potential for utilizing the state's uranium deposits; and
- (2) provide recommendations for strategies, legislative or regulatory changes, potential economic incentive programs, and public health and safety best practices to support the state's uranium mining industry.

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 regarding the matters described by Section 2 of this Act.

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

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