

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 4119
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current regulations governing uranium mining permits are convoluted and repetitive. Uranium mining has been a historic industry in Texas and has great potential for future growth. However, time-consuming and ultimately unproductive public hearings and a convoluted regulatory process may discourage new efforts to expand uranium mining. Clear and commonsense guidelines will help to facilitate new expansion of uranium mining and help bring more jobs to rural Texas.

H.B. 4119 seeks to address this issue and simplify uranium mining regulation by repealing repetitive provisions and making certain applications for amendments to mining authorizations an uncontested matter.

H.B. 4119 amends current law relating to procedural requirements for uranium mining production area authorizations.

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. Amends Section 27.0513(d), Water Code, as follows:

(d) Provides that an application for an authorization or an amendment to an authorization that allows the permit holder to conduct mining and restoration activities in production zones within the boundary established in the permit is an uncontested matter not subject to a contested case hearing or the hearing requirements of Chapter 2001 (Administrative Procedure), Government Code, if, notwithstanding certain sections:

- (1) the authorization is for a production zone located within the boundary of a permit that incorporates, for each production zone addressed in the application, a range table of groundwater quality restoration values used to measure groundwater restoration by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ);
- (2) makes a conforming change; and
- (3) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Repealers: Sections 27.0513(f) (relating to requiring the first application for an authorization for a production zone located within a certain boundary to be subject to certain requirements relating to the opportunity for a contested case hearing and the requirement of the first authorization application) and (g) (relating to providing that a previous authorization issued is effective for the purposes of this subsection and to the opportunity for a contested case hearing for subsequent authorization applications), Water Code.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2023.