

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 74

By: Morales, Eddie

Trade, Workforce & Economic Development
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that the Puerto Verde international port of entry is a major binational trade and industrial development located in Maverick County, Texas, and northern Coahuila, Mexico, and that the project includes a new commercial bridge, manufacturing and warehouse spaces, a multi-modal logistics hub, and residential and retail development. The bill author has also informed the committee that the project, which has received a presidential permit and aims to transform the region's trade and commerce landscape, is designed to enhance United States and Mexico trade efficiency, promote economic growth, generate jobs, and reduce border congestion, but that the project needs an established governing body for port operations. H.B. 74 seeks to address this need by creating the Puerto Verde Port Authority District to serve as that governing body.

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. 74 amends the Special District Local Laws Code to create the Puerto Verde Port Authority District to provide certain improvements, projects, and services for public use and benefit. The bill provides for, among other provisions, navigation district powers, the addition or exclusion of district land, rail facilities, bridge facilities, and the district's dissolution. The district's powers and duties include, subject to certain requirements, the authority to issue obligations and impose assessments and property and operation and maintenance taxes.

H.B. 74 does the following:

- if the bill receives a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to each house, authorizes the district to exercise the power of eminent domain in the manner provided under statutory provisions applicable to water districts generally;
- expressly prohibits the district from exercising the power of eminent domain if the bill does not receive such a vote; and
- establishes that the bill's provisions relating to this vote threshold are not intended to be an expression of a legislative interpretation of the requirements of Section 17(c), Article I, Texas Constitution.

H.B. 74 establishes that all applicable requirements relating to the following have been fulfilled and accomplished with respect to the bill:

- the legal notice of intention to introduce;
- governor action;
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality recommendations; and
- the state constitution and laws and legislative rules and procedures.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.