

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1535
By: Kitman
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Created in 1955, the Trinity River Authority of Texas (TRA) owns and operates five wholesale regional wastewater systems, four wholesale regional drinking water treatment systems, and the dam that forms Lake Livingston. TRA also provides raw water to customers that are primarily municipalities, monitors water quality in the Trinity River basin, and participates in regional water and flood planning. Overall, the Sunset Advisory Commission found TRA, which is not subject to abolishment under the Texas Sunset Act, to be a generally well-run organization but also identified good governance standards and best practices that would strengthen the authority's operations. C.S.H.B. 1535 seeks to implement those standards and practices for TRA and provide for its next sunset review in 2037.

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. 1535 amends Chapter 518, Acts of the 54th Legislature, Regular Session, 1955, to set the next review of the Trinity River Authority of Texas (TRA) under the Texas Sunset Act to be conducted during the 2036-2037 review cycle.

C.S.H.B. 1535 revises provisions governing TRA to implement across-the-board Sunset Advisory Commission policy recommendations relating to the following:

- gubernatorial designation of the presiding officer of TRA's board of directors;
- specific grounds for removal of a board member;
- board member training;
- maintenance of a complaint system;
- public testimony before the board; and
- separation of the board's policy-making responsibilities and the staff's management responsibilities.

The bill provides for the transition to the new training requirements for current board members.

C.S.H.B. 1535 revises provisions to reflect the addition of a member to TRA's board of directors who is appointed from TRA's area-at-large in the same manner as the other members, decreases the term of a member from six years to four years, and specifies that the staggered expiration of members' terms occurs in odd-numbered years. The bill provides for the transition to the

decreased term length. The bill replaces the authorization for the board to appoint a general manager with a requirement for the board to do so.

C.S.H.B. 1535 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

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1535 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 do the following:

- decrease the term of a member of TRA's board of directors from six years to four years and provide for the transition to the decreased term length; and
- specify that the staggered expiration of members' terms occurs in odd-numbered years.