

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1633
By: Gerdes
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law exempts certain wells from a requirement to obtain a permit from a groundwater conservation district, including wells for domestic use or certain small-scale agricultural operations. The bill author has informed the committee that, due to an increase in the export of regional water, small-scale farmers and ranchers in Bastrop and Lee Counties have been forced to pay out of pocket to dig their wells to rapidly increasing depths. H.B. 1633 seeks to address this issue by requiring groundwater conservation districts to consider the effects that permitting decisions may have on wells that are registered with the district when making such a decision.

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. 1633 amends the Water Code to include among the considerations a groundwater conservation district is required to make before granting or denying certain permits or permit amendments the consideration of whether the proposed use of water unreasonably affects wells that are registered with the district and exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit under statutory groundwater conservation district provisions or district rules.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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