

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R13134 JTZ-D

H.B. 2970
By: Paul et al. (Middleton)
Natural Resources
5/2/2025
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The 87th Texas Legislature established the Gulf Coast Protection District to collaborate with the federal government in constructing and operating essential components of the Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration Feasibility Study. The bill author has informed the committee that a key feature of this initiative is the storm surge protection through the Bolivar Roads Gate System, designed to shield the entirety of Galveston Bay from devastating storm surges, thereby protecting Port Houston, one of the largest and busiest ports in the United States. The bill author has further informed the committee that protecting Port Houston and other critical ports within Galveston Bay is vital not only for safeguarding infrastructure against storm surges but also for ensuring vessels can safely navigate the shipping channels, thus maintaining economic stability and maritime safety. H.B. 2970 seeks to address this issue by prohibiting the implementation of a project by the Gulf Coast Protection District from disrupting two-way traffic or navigation safety relating to the ports of Harris County.

H.B. 2970 amends current law relating to the implementation of projects by the Gulf Coast Protection District.

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 9502.0301, Special District Local Laws Code, by adding Subsection (f), as follows:

(f) Prohibits implementation of a project described by Subsection (a) (relating to authorizing the Gulf Coast Protection District to establish certain projects and perform certain actions) from disrupting navigation safety or two-way traffic, as defined by Section 66.0172 (Efficient Pilot Service; Maximum Vessel Length), Transportation Code, in a manner that violates a rule adopted by the board of pilot commissioners for the ports of Harris County under Chapter 66 (Houston Pilots Licensing and Regulatory Act), Transportation Code.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.