

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3525
By: Spiller
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that, with the rapid population growth the North Texas area is experiencing, there is a need to ensure that the groundwater resources are managed responsibly. The bill author has also informed the committee that there are concerns in the North Texas area about groundwater use for aesthetic purposes, such as filling of ponds or lakes greater than two acres in size or enhancing landscape appearance, and about the impact of such use on groundwater sustainability. C.S.H.B. 3525 seeks to address concerns that groundwater resources will not be available for essential purposes, such as domestic and livestock use, by giving the North Texas Groundwater Conservation District the ability to consider whether the proposed use of water from a well is being used for ponds or lakes greater than two acres in size when the district is making a decision on an application for a permit or permit amendment.

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. 3525 amends the Special District Local Laws Code to require the North Texas Groundwater Conservation District, before granting or denying a permit or a permit amendment issued in accordance with applicable Water Code provisions, to consider whether the proposed use of water from the well is wholly or partly to provide water to a pond or lake with a surface area greater than two acres to enhance the appearance of the landscape. The bill applies only to an application for a permit or permit amendment submitted on or after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3525 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.

With respect to the bill's required consideration of whether the proposed use of water from a well is wholly or partly to provide water to a pond or lake to enhance the appearance of the

landscape, the substitute restricts the applicable ponds and lakes to ponds and lakes with surface areas greater than two acres, whereas the introduced did not include that restriction.

The substitute includes a provision absent from the introduced that establishes that the bill applies only to an application for a permit or permit amendment submitted on or after the bill's effective date.

Whereas the introduced did not provide for an effective date, the substitute provides for its possible immediate effect, contingent on receiving the requisite constitutional vote, or September 1, 2025, otherwise.