

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 5085
By: Gervin-Hawkins
Agriculture & Livestock
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to the Native Plant Society of Texas, there are over 40 seed libraries or seed banks in Texas, each with resources and tools for ecosystem restoration and seed preservation, among other benefits. The bill author has informed the committee that constituents and stakeholders have shared information regarding the benefits of seed banks and seed preservation and that the legislature should be informed of seed preservation's potential to better Texans' livelihood. H.B. 5085 seeks to inform the legislature on the impact seed banks and seed preservation may have on food access and the environment by requiring the Department of Agriculture to conduct a study on such potential impacts in certain counties.

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. 5085 requires the Department of Agriculture (TDA) to conduct a study on the impact of seed banks and seed preservation in each county with a population of more than 2,000,000 and that has a conservation facility located in the county. The bill requires TDA to collaborate with any state agency, political subdivision, or other organization TDA determines relevant to the study, and in conducting the study, to assess the impact a seed bank or seed preservation may have on the following:

- access to food, including the number of people a seed bank can generate food for and the limitations of a seed bank in generating food or feeding people; and
- the environment, including climate change mitigation and ecosystem restoration and biodiversity recovery following a natural disaster, including a hurricane, fire, or flood.

H.B. 5085 requires TDA, not later than December 1, 2026, to prepare and submit a report to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and appropriate standing committees of the legislature on the results of the study and recommendations for legislative or other action on seed banks, seed preservation, and seed germination and propagation. The bill's provisions expire January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.