

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1959
By: Hagenbuch
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill sponsor 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 sponsor 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 for enhancing landscape appearance, and about the impact of such use on groundwater sustainability. S.B. 1959 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

S.B. 1959 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.