

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 2497
By: Zaffirini
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill sponsor has informed the committee that Texans expect their public drinking water supply systems to provide clean, safe drinking water but that some communities have experienced ongoing water quality concerns including discoloration, foul odors, cloudiness, and mineral deposits, which are issues classified as secondary drinking water concerns. The bill sponsor has also informed the committee that while secondary contaminants are not considered harmful to health, they can affect water quality, household appliances, and consumer confidence. The bill sponsor has also informed the committee that a key concern is that some public drinking water supply systems continue to allow the deterioration of drinking water wells and the delivery of poor water quality while also raising water rates on their customers and refusing to reinstall filtration systems they have previously removed. The bill sponsor has further informed the committee that constituents in Senate District 21 have raised concerns regarding repeated excessive rate increases while experiencing ongoing secondary drinking water contaminants and that some communities within the district have experienced these problems without public drinking water supply systems being held accountable, underscoring the need for stronger regulatory oversight. S.B. 2497 seeks to address these concerns by authorizing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality by order to require a public drinking water supply system that serves fewer than 100 connections and obtains its water supply from an underground source to install a treatment system, which may include a filtration system, for that source under certain conditions.

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. 2497 amends the Health and Safety Code to authorize the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) by order to require a public drinking water supply system that serves fewer than 100 connections and obtains its water supply from an underground source to install a treatment system, which may include a filtration system, for that source if the public water system:

- has repeatedly exceeded the maximum contaminant level or secondary constituent level for one or more parameters established by the TCEQ;
- has been the subject of more than one substantiated water quality complaint submitted to the TCEQ, not including a complaint submitted to the TCEQ regarding water quality issues associated with the distribution system that are not related to water quality issues

from the underground source, during the preceding 12 months for which the TCEQ has determined a need to install additional treatment measures, including requiring the public water system to install a filtration system; and

- can install at a reasonable cost the treatment system for that source to manage an exceedance of a secondary constituent level, if applicable.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.