

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1581
By: Simpson
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that fluoride is naturally occurring in many groundwater supplies and that for the past few decades municipalities have been adding fluoride to drinking water as a means to reduce tooth decay. While many claim that fluoride is vital to the oral health of the population and that it has no side effects, other reports indicate that water fluoridation may have negative effects in young children with gum problems, may contribute to developmental issues, and may have some links to cancer. Many have advocated for a ban on adding the substance to a water supply altogether. H.B. 1581 seeks to address this issue and balance the two views.

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. 1581 amends the Health and Safety Code to require a water supply system that furnishes drinking water to which fluoride has been added to disclose in a conspicuous place on the system's website the amount of fluoride that occurs naturally in the drinking water furnished by the system to a customer; the amount of fluoride added to the drinking water before distribution to a customer; the combined amount of naturally occurring and added fluoride in the drinking water; the identity of the person who supplies the fluoride additive and the person with whom the system contracts to add fluoride to the drinking water, as applicable; and the annual cost of adding fluoride to the drinking water distributed by the system, including the cost of the fluoride additive, the labor for adding the fluoride, and any contracts related to the fluoride additive. The bill requires a water supply system that does not maintain a website to disclose the information annually with a bill sent to its customers. The bill requires a water supply system to disclose the information not later than January 1, 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.