

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1459
By: Bettencourt
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that the West Harris County Regional Water Authority was created several years ago for the purpose of delivering surface water to users within its boundaries so that the users would be in compliance with certain regulations requiring the users to convert from groundwater supplies to surface water supplies. The parties identify a need to amend the authority's powers and duties, which S.B. 1459 seeks to address.

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. 1459 amends Chapter 414, Acts of the 77th Legislature, Regular Session, 2001, to prohibit the West Harris County Regional Water Authority from annexing or adding territory to the authority that, at the time of annexation or addition, is located within the boundaries of both another regional water authority created as a conservation and reclamation district and a subsidence district. The bill applies this prohibition only to an annexation or addition of land that is completed on or after the bill's effective date. The bill establishes that the authority is not a special water authority for purposes of Water Code provisions applicable to certain water districts.

S.B. 1459 removes the requirement with regard to provisions relating to the purchase of water from another entity that the authority provide each district or municipality within its boundaries information regarding the share of the capital costs to be paid by the district or municipality and provide each district or municipality the opportunity to fund its share of the capital costs with proceeds from the sale of bonds or fees and charges collected by the districts or municipalities. The bill instead authorizes the authority to provide such information and opportunity.

S.B. 1459 establishes that, except as provided by its provisions, the authority retains all the rights, powers, privileges, authority, duties, and functions that it had before the bill's effective date. The bill provides for the validation and confirmation of certain authority actions and proceedings taken before the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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