

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 724  
By: Larson  
Natural Resources  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been noted that brackish groundwater is a valuable but underutilized resource. H.B. 724 seeks to incentivize the extraction, treatment, and use of brackish groundwater by making it easier to obtain certain authorizations.

### **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. 724 amends the Water Code to require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to grant an authorization to discharge water into a watercourse or stream and then subsequently divert or reuse the water, less carriage losses, if the water is treated brackish groundwater or return flows derived from treated brackish groundwater and the person is authorized under statutory provisions relating to water quality control to discharge the water into the watercourse or stream. The bill requires TCEQ to grant a water right or an amendment to a permit, certified filing, or certificate of adjudication authorizing an interbasin transfer to an applicant who proposes to divert treated brackish groundwater or return flows derived from treated brackish groundwater and transfer the water to another river basin, provided that the applicant has obtained authorization under the bill's provisions to discharge the water into a watercourse or stream in the basin of origin and then subsequently divert and reuse the water. The bill exempts such a proposed water transfer from the other statutory provisions relating to interbasin transfers.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2019.