

SUBJECT: Establishing the Don't Mess with Texas Water Program

COMMITTEE: Natural Resources — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Ritter, Callegari, Corte, Frost, T. King, Laubenberg, D. Miller, Smithee

0 nays

3 absent — Creighton, Lucio, Martinez Fischer

WITNESSES: For —Gustavo Gonzalez, City of Corpus Christi; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Trey Blocker, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Shanna Igo, Texas Municipal League; Christina Wisdom, Texas Chemical Council)

Against — None

On — Brian Christian, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

DIGEST: HB 3543 would amend Water Code, ch. 26 to require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to establish a Don't Mess With Texas Water Program to prevent illegal dumping by placing signs at major highway water crossings that provide a toll-free number to report illegal dumping. TCEQ would be required to establish a toll-free number hotline that would forward calls to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

A local government could work with the commission to participate in the program. A local government that participated in the program would have to contribute to the cost of operating the toll-free number hotline. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) would be required to work with TCEQ in placing the signs.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2009.