

**SUBJECT:** Lowering the minimum acreage of qualified open-space land to raise bees

**COMMITTEE:** Agriculture and Livestock — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — T. King, C. Anderson, Cyrier, González, Rinaldi, Simpson,  
Springer

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — Jay Crossley, Houston Food Policy Workgroup; Scott Norman,  
Texas Association of Builders; Jerry Seay; (*Registered, but did not testify:*  
Gib Lewis, Exotic Wildlife Association; Steven Garza and Daniel  
Gonzalez, Texas Association of Realtors)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Donna Warndof, Harris  
County; Conrad John, Travis County Commissioners Court)

On — Judith McGearry, Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance

**BACKGROUND:** For purposes of appraising agricultural land, Tax Code, sec. 23.51 defines  
“qualified open-space land” as land currently devoted principally to  
agricultural use to the degree of intensity generally accepted in the area  
and that has been devoted principally to agricultural use for five of the  
previous seven years.

“Agricultural use” includes several activities, including the use of land to  
raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or  
other products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is  
not less than five or more than 20 acres.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 1513 would amend Tax Code, sec. 23.51 by lowering the minimum  
acreage of land used to raise or keep bees that could be eligible for  
appraisal as qualified open-space land from five acres to two acres.

The bill would take effect January 1, 2016, and would apply only to the  
appraisal of land for a tax year that began on or after that date.