

SUBJECT:	Expanding the use of water from the Edwards Aquifer to additional areas
COMMITTEE:	Natural Resources — committee substitute recommended
VOTE:	8 ayes — T. King, E. Thompson, Gámez, Kacal, Lalani, Metcalf, Price, Rogers 0 nays 3 absent — Kitzman, Ramos, Zwiener
WITNESSES:	For — John Littlefield, County Line Special Utility District; Marc Friberg, Roland Ruiz, Edwards Aquifer Authority (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Graham Moore, Alliance Regional Water Association) Against — None
DIGEST:	CSHB 1646 would expand the geographic area in which water withdrawn from the Edwards Aquifer could be used. The bill would allow water withdrawn from the aquifer to be used within the geographic area of a certificate of convenience and necessity, any part of which was located within the boundaries of the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA) established on June 28, 1996. The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.
SUPPORTERS SAY:	By allowing certain additional areas to use water from the Edwards Aquifer, CSHB 1646 could reduce the need for water providers to implement costly and unreasonable reengineering of their infrastructure to separate aquifer water from other water sources. The bill also would ensure that some areas located outside the boundaries of the EAA's jurisdiction could continue to be serviced by the Edwards Aquifer. CSHB 1646 would not allow additional aquifer water extraction.
CRITICS SAY:	No concerns identified.