CHAPTER 438

H.B. No. 2208

AN ACT
relating to the calculation of current market value of certain water rights by the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Section 49.509, Water Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(a) Subject to Subsection (d), the [The] Rio Grande Regional Water Authority annually at its January meeting shall calculate the current market value by using the average price per acre-foot of municipal use water after conversion from irrigation use water to municipal use water with a municipal priority of allocation under commission rules of the last three purchases involving:

(1) a municipal water supplier;
(2) a party other than a municipal water supplier; and
(3) at least 100 acre-feet of municipal use water, with municipal priority of allocation.

(d) For purposes of this subsection, "outer boundaries of a district" means a district's boundaries without considering any exclusion of land from inside the district. The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority shall exclude from the calculation of current market value under Subsection (a) any sale between a municipal water supplier and a district if any territory inside the outer boundaries of the district is:

(1) subject to the municipal water supplier's certificate of convenience and necessity; or
(2) in the corporate limits of the municipality served by the municipal water supplier, if the municipal water supplier does not hold a certificate of convenience and necessity.

SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies only to a calculation of current market value of certain water rights made by the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority on or after the effective date of this Act. A calculation of current market value that is made before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect when the calculation was made, and the former law continues in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

Passed by the House on March 31, 2009: Yeas 147, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting; passed by the Senate on May 27, 2009: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Approved June 19, 2009.
Effective September 1, 2009.

CHAPTER 439

H.B. No. 2217

AN ACT
relating to partnering with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and other federal agencies to establish a veterans hospital in the Rio Grande Valley region of the state.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.019 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.019. VETERANS HOSPITAL. (a) The Texas Veterans Commission and the Department of State Health Services shall work with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and any other appropriate federal agency to propose that the federal government establish a veterans hospital in the Rio Grande Valley region of the state.

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(b) The state may contribute money, property, and other resources to the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a veterans hospital described by this section.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

Passed by the House on April 22, 2009: Yeas 149, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; passed by the Senate on May 21, 2009: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Approved June 19, 2009.


CHAPTER 440

H.B. No. 2225

AN ACT

relating to creating a committee to review the process for finding permanent placements for children in the conservatorship of the state.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. (a) The Department of Family and Protective Services, in conjunction with the adoption review committee described by Subsection (b) of this section, shall conduct an extensive review of the foster care system to:

(1) identify obstacles that impede the department’s ability to find a permanent placement for foster children, including placement by adoption; and

(2) develop ways to improve the foster care system by:

(A) reducing the time a child is in the conservatorship of the department before being permanently placed;

(B) reducing the number of children in the conservatorship of the department who are placed outside of their home county; and

(C) enhancing the procedures for adopting foster children.

(b) The adoption review committee is composed of the following nine members:

(1) four members appointed by the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission as follows:

(A) an employee of the Department of Family and Protective Services;

(B) a representative from a licensed child-placing agency that provides adoption services;

(C) a representative from the Council on Adoptable Children of Texas; and

(D) an attorney with expertise in handling adoptions; and

(2) five members appointed by the governor who have expertise in or a demonstrated commitment to adoption issues.

(c) The adoption review committee shall meet at least quarterly.

(d) Not later than December 1, 2010, the Department of Family and Protective Services shall submit a written report of the results of the review conducted under Subsection (a) of this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the House Committee on Human Services, and the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. The report must include:

(1) a summary of the findings of the review conducted under Subsection (a) of this section;

(2) a summary of the obstacles identified in the review that impede the department’s ability to find permanent placements for foster children;