

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 991
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Natural Resources
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, the available water supplies in the Rio Grande Valley are dwindling due to growing municipal and economic needs. S.B. 991 would allow the use of state or federal funds to provide grants or loans through the Texas Water Development Board for water conservation projects to irrigation districts.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 991 regulates the operations of the Texas Water Bank.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 15.703(a), Water Code, to authorize the Texas Water Development Board (board) to take all actions necessary to operate the water bank and to facilitate the transfer of water rights from the water bank for future beneficial use, including but not limited to purchasing, holding, and transferring rather than selling, water or water rights in its own name and entering into contracts with persons to pay for feasibility studies of the preparation of plans and specifications relating to water conservation efforts or to estimate the amount of water that would be saved through conservation efforts. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 15.705, Water Code, as follows:

Sec. 15.705. FEES. Authorizes the board to charge a transaction fee per transfer not to exceed one percent, rather than \$500, of the value of the water or water right received into or transferred from the water bank to cover expenses of the board in operating the water bank. Requires the board to place fees in the water bank account of the water assistance fund where they are to be separately accounted for and used, with interest, only for the administration and operation of the water bank by the board. Deletes text regarding exempt political subdivisions.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 15.707(a), Water Code, to provide that the water account is created as a special account in the water assistance fund and is composed of money received from the transfer of water or water rights held in the board's name in the bank. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.