

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R8922 JMG-D

S.B. 1627
By: Wentworth
Natural Resources
4/2/2001
As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1627 requires the Texas Department of Agriculture to establish an atmosphere modification research program to conduct basic and applied research designed to increase understanding of precipitation and the ability to control precipitation to decrease the effects of drought, hail, and flooding on the environment and man-made structures.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Agriculture in SECTION 1 (Section 50A.003, Agriculture Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Title 3, Agriculture Code, by adding Chapter 50A, as follows:

CHAPTER 50A. ATMOSPHERE MODIFICATION RESEARCH

SUBCHAPTER A. ATMOSPHERE MODIFICATION RESEARCH PROGRAM

Sec. 50A.001. PURPOSE. Sets forth legislative purpose.

Sec. 50A.002. PARTICIPATION. Sets forth provisions of participation of certain persons.

Sec. 50A.003. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. Requires the Department of Agriculture (department) to perform certain procedures.

Sec. 50A.004. DURATION OF GRANT. Requires a competitive research grant to be for a period of five years and provides that, subject to review by the department, it may be extended for a period of not more than two years.

Sec. 50A.005. REPORT. Requires a program participant to file with the department an annual report detailing the progress of the participant's project at a certain time.

Sec. 50A.006. EVALUATION OF PROGRAM. Requires the department to cause a biennial independent evaluation of the program to be conducted by a team of experts not associated with the program or the department.

[Sections 50A.007-50A.010 reserved for expansion]

Sec. 50A.011. PURPOSE. Sets forth legislative purpose regarding the establishment of an atmosphere modification research center (center).

Sec. 50A.012. PUBLIC FORUM. Requires the center to provide a public forum to disseminate research findings and recommendations and to obtain comments from certain

entities.

Sec. 50A.013. ATMOSPHERE MODIFICATION RESEARCH CENTER FUND. (a) Provides that the atmosphere modification research center fund is created as a trust fund with the comptroller and is required to be administered by the department as a trustee on behalf of the center. Provides that the fund is composed of certain funds.

(b) Authorizes money in the atmosphere modification research center fund to be used only to finance atmosphere modification research of the center.

Sec. 50A.014. DIRECTOR; STAFF. (a) Requires the department to select a center director from among the faculty at Texas Tech University.

(b) Requires the center to be staffed by certain persons associated with Texas Tech University.

Sec. 50A.015. SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD. (a) Requires the department to establish a scientific advisory board to advise the center on certain criteria.

(b) Requires the board to establish and review metric's to assess the effectiveness of the center's research projects.

Sec. 50A.016. REPORT. Requires the center to file annually with the department and the legislature a report detailing the center's activities, findings, and recommended actions.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2001.