

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 3735
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Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties contend that certain Water Code provisions relating to the water rights application process are out of date. H.B. 3735 seeks to address this issue by amending statutory provisions regarding an application for a new or amended water right submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

H.B. 3735 repeals provisions of the Water Code relating to the content of the map or plat required to accompany an application for a new or amended water right and amends the Water Code to remove the requirement that such a map or plat be drawn in a certain form. H.B. 3735 instead provides for such a map or plat in the form and containing the information prescribed by TCEQ. The bill limits the factors TCEQ may consider in determining whether an appropriation is detrimental to the public welfare with regard to granting an application for a new or amended water right to factors that are within the jurisdiction and expertise of TCEQ as established by certain water rights provisions.

H.B. 3735 amends current law relating to an application for a new or amended water right submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 11.002(1) and (3), Water Code, to redefine "commission" and "executive director."

SECTION 2. Amends Section 11.125(a), Water Code, to require that an application for a new or amended water right be accompanied by a map or plat in the form and containing the information prescribed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), rather than by a map or plat drawn on tracing linen on a scale not less than one inch equals 2,000 feet.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 11.128, Water Code, as follows:

Sec. 11.128. PAYMENT OF FEE. Requires the applicant, rather than requires the applicant if he is not exempted from payment of the filing fee under Section 12.112 (Fees: Exemptions) of this code, to pay the filing fee prescribed by Section 5.701 (Fees) at the time the application is filed, rather than prescribed by Section 5.701(c) (relating to the fee for filing a water permit application) at the time he files the application. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 11.134, Water Code, by adding Subsection (b-1), to authorize TCEQ, in determining whether an appropriation is detrimental to the public welfare under Subsection (b)(3)(C) (relating to TCEQ granting an application only if the proposed appropriation is not detrimental to the public welfare), to consider only the factors that are within the jurisdiction and expertise of TCEQ as established by this chapter (Water Rights).

SECTION 5. Repealers: Sections 11.125 (b) (relating to the map or plat showing certain locations) and (c) (relating to the map or plat containing certain additional information), Water Code.

SECTION 6. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 7. Effective date: September 1, 2017.