

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3545
By: Oliveira
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority was created by the legislature several years ago as a conservation and reclamation district to serve a public use and benefit by bringing together regional water interests to accomplish projects and services in South Texas. The authority's mission is to enhance the capability of the primary water source in the region to serve the region well into the future. The parties note that the authority was created to supplement, but not replace, the services, regulatory powers, and authority of political subdivisions within the authority's boundaries. The interested parties further note that the authority seeks to create an infrastructure improvement council to help address the region's critical water needs. C.S.H.B. 3545 seeks to address this issue.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3545 amends Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, to require the board of directors of the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority to establish an infrastructure improvement council in connection with the implementation of infrastructure improvement projects within the authority's territory. The bill requires the board to set, according to a formula determined by the board, an annual voluntary assessment and requires revenue from the assessment to be deposited to the credit of an infrastructure improvement fund to be administered by the council. The bill requires a member of the authority's member conference that pays the voluntary assessment to appoint a representative to serve as a member of the council. The bill authorizes the council to apply for financial assistance under Water Code provisions governing the state water implementation fund for Texas and the state water implementation revenue fund for Texas and to implement infrastructure improvement projects approved by the council. The bill requires the council to study the viability of each infrastructure improvement project requested by council members to determine whether an infrastructure improvement project is eligible to receive financial assistance from the council. The bill establishes that only council members are eligible to receive financial assistance from the council for infrastructure improvement projects under the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3545 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Section 1.01, Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, is amended.

SECTION 2. Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, is amended by adding Article IB to read as follows:

ARTICLE IB. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

Sec. 1B.01. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL. (a) The board shall establish an infrastructure improvement council in connection with the implementation of infrastructure improvement projects within the authority's territory. The board shall appoint members of the conference to the council.

(b) The council may apply for financial assistance under Subchapter G, Chapter 15, Water Code, for the implementation of infrastructure improvement projects under this article.

(c) The council shall study the viability of each infrastructure improvement project requested by council members to determine whether an infrastructure improvement project is eligible to receive financial assistance from the council.

(d) Only members of the council are eligible to receive financial assistance from the council for infrastructure improvement projects under this article.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 2. Chapter 385, Acts of the 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, is amended by adding Article IB to read as follows:

ARTICLE IB. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

Sec. 1B.01. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL. (a) The board shall establish an infrastructure improvement council in connection with the implementation of infrastructure improvement projects within the authority's territory.

(b) The board shall set, according to a formula determined by the board, an annual voluntary assessment. Revenue from the assessment imposed under this subsection shall be deposited to the credit of an infrastructure improvement fund to be administered by the council.

(c) A member of the conference that pays the voluntary assessment under Subsection (b) shall appoint a representative to serve as a member of the council.

(d) The council may apply for financial assistance under Subchapters G and H, Chapter 15, Water Code, and may implement infrastructure improvement projects approved by the council under this article.

(e) The council shall study the viability of each infrastructure improvement project requested by council members to determine whether an infrastructure improvement project is eligible to receive financial assistance from the council.

(f) Only members of the council are eligible to receive financial assistance from the council for infrastructure improvement projects under this article.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect
September 1, 2015.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.