

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 807
By: Larson
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted that, while the need for a comprehensive, statewide water plan is central to the development of the state's water resources, the division of the state into regional water planning groups may be counterproductive at times as a group may prioritize projects in its region over larger scale projects needed to serve rapidly growing areas. H.B. 807 seeks to address this issue by providing for an interregional planning council.

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

H.B. 807 amends the Water Code to require the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), at an appropriate time in each five-year cycle for the adoption of a new state water plan, to appoint an interregional planning council that consists of one member of each regional water planning group to serve on the council until a new state water plan is adopted. The bill requires each regional water planning group to nominate one or more members for appointment to the council and requires the TWDB to consider the nominations in making appointments to the council and appoint the members of the initial council not later than September 1, 2020. The bill establishes the council's purposes as the improvement of coordination among the regional water planning groups, and between each regional water planning group and the TWDB, in meeting the goals of the state water planning process and the water needs of the state as a whole; the facilitation of dialogue regarding water management strategies that could affect multiple regional water planning areas; and the sharing of best practices regarding operation of the regional water planning process. The bill requires the council to hold at least one public meeting and prepare a report to the TWDB on the council's work.

H.B. 807 expands the required contents of a regional water planning group's regional water plan to include the following:

- identification of unnecessary or counterproductive variations in specific drought response strategies, including outdoor watering restrictions, among user groups in the regional water planning area that may confuse the public or otherwise impede drought response efforts;
- if the regional water planning area has significant identified water needs, provision of a specific assessment of the potential for aquifer storage and recovery projects to meet

those needs;

- the setting of one or more specific goals for gallons of water use per capita per day in each decade of the period covered by the plan for the municipal water user groups in the regional water planning area; and
- an assessment of the progress of the regional water planning area in encouraging cooperation between water user groups for the purpose of achieving economies of scale and otherwise incentivizing strategies that benefit the entire region.

The bill includes as legislative recommendations a regional water planning group should make in conjunction with the submission of an adopted regional water plan to the TWDB recommendations for changes that the members of the planning group believe would improve the water planning process.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.