

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
82R7545 TRH-D

H.B. 1527
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Agriculture & Rural Affairs
4/29/2011
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) oversees a weights and measures program to protect consumers and businesses by ensuring that equity prevails in all commercial transactions involving determinations of quantity.

Devices include scales, liquid measuring devices, and liquid petroleum gas measuring devices.

The equipment used to test the devices for accuracy is calibrated at TDA's metrology lab. The lab maintains primary standards, which are certified by the National Institute of Standards and Technology every 10 years. These standards support the calibration process and are aligned with the standards used by all state weights and measures programs across the United States.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is phasing out of the calibration and certification of state standards and has encouraged states to now seek these services at an NIST-approved lab. TDA does not currently have statutory allowance to seek these services elsewhere.

H.B. 1527 would allow TDA the necessary ability to align state standards of weights and measures at an NIST-approved lab.

H.B. 1527 amends current law relating to the certification of the state's primary standards of weights and measures.

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 Section 13.113(b), Agriculture Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to maintain the primary standards, rather than the official standards, in a safe and suitable place in the offices of TDA. Prohibits the standards from being moved except for repairs or certification. Requires TDA to maintain the standards in good order and to submit them to the National Institute of Standards and Technology or to a laboratory approved by the National Institute of Standards and Technology for certification at least once each 10 years.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2011.