

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
84R14981 RMA-D

S.C.R. 34  
By: Creighton; Nichols  
Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs  
4/9/2015  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Among the most urgent issues facing Texas is the recent prolonged drought that has resulted in a diminished freshwater supply and the need to find alternative water sources. Montgomery County is one area that is facing special difficulties in sustaining an adequate water supply, not only because of the drought, but also because of its increasing population, which grew by 9.5 percent between 2010 and 2013, and its need to comply with a mandate to reduce usage of the Gulf Coast Aquifer by 30 percent by the year 2016.

Texas is estimated to have more than 2.7 billion acre-feet of brackish groundwater, a crucial option for an alternative water supply, and desalination techniques can reduce the saline content of those brackish supplies to meet freshwater standards. The City of El Paso and Fort Bliss have established a successful desalination program at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, which can produce up to 27.5 million gallons of potable water each day from brackish water. Employing a similar desalination method, Montgomery County could replenish and maintain a sufficient water supply through its access to brackish groundwater sources. Treating the abundance of brackish groundwater in the area to comply with freshwater regulations has the potential to provide Montgomery County residents with sufficient water resources while alleviating pressure on freshwater resources. This innovative process is indeed deserving of further research.

### **RESOLVED**

That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby direct the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to conduct a feasibility study on the use of desalinated brackish groundwater from brackish groundwater sources for water supply in Montgomery County.

That this study be completed no later than January 1, 2018.

That TWDB submit a full report, including its findings and recommendations, to the 85th Texas Legislature, the county judge of Montgomery County, and the county commissioners of Montgomery County no later than June 1, 2018.