

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R5040 SLB-F

H.B. 544
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Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs
5/5/2017
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties claim that many rural water utilities are intimidated by the regulatory hurdles involved in accessing funds from the rural water assistance fund. H.B. 544 addresses this issue by expanding the scope of the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) authority to contract for assistance in connection with the fund.

H.B. 544 amends the Water Code for purposes of TWDB authority to use money in the rural water assistance fund to contract for assistance to assist rural political subdivisions in obtaining and using financing from the fund to expand the source of that financing to financing that is from any source for a purpose described by statutory provisions relating to the use of the fund. H.B. 544 adds planning assistance as such a type of assistance for which the TWDB may contract.

H.B. 544 amends current law relating to the use of the rural water assistance fund.

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 15.994(c), Water Code, to authorize the Texas Water Development Board to use money in the rural water assistance fund to contract for outreach, financial, planning, and technical assistance to assist rural political subdivisions in obtaining and using financing from any source for a purpose described by this section (Use of Fund), rather than financing from the fund.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.