

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
86R962 TSR-D

S.B. 81
By: Hall
Water & Rural Affairs
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Water reservoir projects (such as lakes) benefit surrounding communities by providing stable water supplies that attract new businesses and jobs. These projects also typically boost taxable real estate values. With such high effects on local areas, a reservoir's official name is crucial to both its desirability for living and its economic marketability.

In Texas, the water district in charge of the reservoir project typically has jurisdiction over the official, final name. S.B. 81 would require water districts to request approval from the local county commissioners court on the naming choice of a reservoir. Time limits apply for the court's response, along with specifications for reservoirs that span two or more counties.

As proposed, S.B. 81 amends current law relating to the naming of a reservoir by certain water districts.

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 Subchapter H, Chapter 49, Water Code, by adding Section 49.239, as follows:

Sec. 49.239. RESERVOIR NAME APPROVAL. (a) Requires a water district to request approval of the name from the commissioners court of the county in which the reservoir project is located before a district may name a reservoir that the district is authorized to construct and that the district will own or operate.

(b) Requires the district to request approval of the name from the commissioners court of the county in which the reservoir project site is principally located if the reservoir project site is located in more than one county. Provides that, for purposes of this subsection, a reservoir project site is principally located in a county if a majority of the acreage of the reservoir surface area will be located in that county.

(c) Requires a commissioners court that receives a request from a district for the approval of a name for a reservoir under this section to approve or deny the request not later than the 60th day after the date the district submits the request. Provides that if the commissioners court fails to approve or deny the request within the period prescribed by this subsection, the request is considered approved.

(d) Provides that this section does not prevent a district from soliciting input regarding a name for a reservoir from the commissioners court of each county in which the reservoir or any part of the reservoir will be located.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 49.239, as added by this Act, applies to a reservoir project that was authorized to be constructed before the effective date of this Act, but that is not complete on the effective date of this Act and a reservoir project that is authorized to be constructed on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2019.