

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 991
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Agriculture, Water & Rural Affairs
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 991 would require the General Land Office (GLO) and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to jointly conduct a study regarding the use of renewable energy (wind, solar, wave, and tidal power) to develop and desalinate brackish groundwater and seawater. Under the bill, GLO and TWDB may coordinate with a research division of a university in conducting a study.

These two agencies should appropriately complement one another in this study. According to the Environmental Defense Fund, GLO has already conducted similar research in the past. TWDB already maintains brackish groundwater databases.

Passage of S.B. 991 would be an important first step to understanding how low-water-use renewable energy can help alleviate some of the state's water pressure.

S.B. 991 amends current law relating to a requirement that the General Land Office conduct a study regarding the use of wind or solar power to desalinate brackish groundwater.

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. DEFINITIONS. Defines "development board" and "land office."

SECTION 2. STUDY. (a) Requires the Texas General Land Office (GLO), in consultation with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), to conduct a study regarding the use of wind and solar power to desalinate brackish groundwater on real property owned by the state.

(b) Authorizes GLO and TWDB to request data from any state agency in conducting the study. Requires an agency receiving a request under this subsection to provide the requested data.

(c) Authorizes GLO to coordinate with a research division of a university in conducting the study.

SECTION 3. REPORT. (a) Requires GLO, not later than December 31, 2016, to report the results of the study conducted under this Act to the governor and the legislature.

(b) Prohibits the report described by this section from disclosing information that is excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021 (Availability of Public Information), Government Code.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.