

- SUBJECT:** Providing incentives for conserving water in outdoor landscapes
- COMMITTEE:** Agriculture and Livestock — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — T. King, González, C. Anderson, Burrows, Cyrier, Rinaldi, Stucky  
0 nays
- WITNESSES:** No public hearing
- BACKGROUND:** Observers have noted that various local programs around Texas encourage water conservation and suggest that providing water conserving products as part of certain potential landscape and irrigation incentive programs would help in this effort.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3717 would require the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to establish, maintain, and publish a list of publicly funded programs in Texas that encourage the replacement of lawn with landscaping that requires less water to maintain. Any governmental entity or retail public utility operating a landscape incentive program wholly or partly funded with public money would be required to register the program with TDA for inclusion on the list.
- TDA also would have to establish, maintain, and publish a list of the types of grasses and other plants determined to sustain healthy growth with minimal irrigation in each type of climate in Texas for the benefit of administrators and participants of landscape incentive programs.
- Any governmental entity or retail public utility operating a landscape incentive program wholly or partly funded with public money could, except as otherwise provided by law, provide certain monetary incentives. These incentives would be for the purchase and installation of irrigation or sprinkler controllers that make periodic adjustments to irrigation applications based on weather conditions, evapotranspiration rates, and soil moisture levels for the purpose of conserving water by applying

irrigation only in amounts necessary to sustain the healthy growth of the irrigated plants.

This bill would take effect on September 1, 2017.