

SUBJECT: Authorizing certain project agreements by certain drainage districts

COMMITTEE: Natural Resources — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Larson, Metcalf, Harris, Lang, Price, Ramos

0 nays

5 absent — Dominguez, Farrar, T. King, Nevárez, Oliverson

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 16 — 31-0

WITNESSES: *On House companion bill HB 4293:*

For — Martin Dies, Orange County Drainage District

Against — None

On — David Green, General Land Office; Phil Kelley, Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Allen Sims, Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7)

BACKGROUND: Concerned parties have noted that the coastal barrier area of the Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay is at risk of flooding from major natural disasters. Some have suggested area drainage districts could begin to mitigate these concerns if they were to partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

DIGEST: SB 2212 would authorize Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7, Orange County Drainage District of Orange County, and Velasco Drainage District to enter into a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a project in the respective districts.

If a district were to enter into an agreement, it would be required to develop a maintenance and operation plan for the project and to submit a report to the General Land Office (GLO) and Legislature biennially on expenditures of state money relating to the project and the extent to which additional appropriations or additional money from other sources was

needed for the next biennium.

If a district entered into a project partnership agreement before November 1, 2020, the first report would be required to be submitted by December 1, 2020.

A district would be authorized to enter into an agreement for a public-private partnership to fund a local share of or the costs of the operation and maintenance of the project. A district also could enter into an agreement with the GLO to obtain funding for a local match requirement or the operation and maintenance of the project.

If a project was built in a district, the district could accept money from any source to fund the maintenance and operation of the project and to provide local matching funds required by the project partnership agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.