

**SUBJECT:** Authorizing increase of certain groundwater production fees

**COMMITTEE:** Natural Resources — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — E. Thompson, Gamez, Kacal, Kitzman, Lalani, Metcalf, Rogers, Zwiener

0 nays

3 absent — T. King, Price, Ramos

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage (April 13) — 28 - 2

**WITNESSES:** For — Tim Loftus, Brian Sledge, Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District (*Registered, but did not testify*: Brie Franco, City of Austin; Mike Clifford, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance; Danielle Goshen, National Wildlife Federation; and 6 individuals)

Against — None

**BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that authorizing an increase in the annual groundwater production fee related to the use of certain wells permitted for nonagricultural uses would help equalize relevant production fees.

**DIGEST:** SB 1745 would authorize the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, beginning on September 1, 2023, to increase the annual production fee charged for a permitted well used for nonagricultural purposes by not more than 10 cents per thousand gallons. The annual fee could be increased only until it was equal to the greater of 38 cents per thousand gallons or the raw surface water cost of other wholesale suppliers serving customers in the district.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.