

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R14558 JJT-F

H.B. 3929
By: Crownover (Averitt)
Natural Resources
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Railroad Commission of Texas (commission) offers rebates to consumers who buy propane water heaters. This can be done during new construction or during the replacement of an electric water heater. Consumers can also be eligible for greater rebate amounts if they qualify as a Propane Star Home or Propane SuperStar Home. Funding for the rebates comes from self-imposed fees in the industry. After the rebates from this program have been awarded, surplus funds may still exist. Currently, the commission divides the surplus fees and sends half to the operating budget of the Alternative Fuels Research and Education Division and returns half of the rebate account. There is concern that the commission is not returning half of the fees back to the rebate account.

As proposed, H.B. 3929 requires the commission to deposit half of the surplus funds from the rebate account into the rebate account.

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 Section 113.246(b), Natural Resources Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the Railroad Commission of Texas, notwithstanding the limitation on consumer rebate program spending imposed by Section 113.2435(c)(5), on August 31, 2008, to carry forward unexpended amounts that were budgeted for consumer rebate programs during the state fiscal year ending on that date and to include those amounts in the commission's operating budget for consumer rebate programs for the state fiscal year beginning September 1, 2008, conditioned on the commission reserving no more than 50 percent of those amounts, to the degree necessary for operational cash flow.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.