
Authorizing property transfers for the Willacy County Navigation District

HB 1053 by Guillen (Lucio)

Digest

HB 1053 would have authorized the Willacy County Navigation District to sell, exchange, or lease real property or interest in real property. The disposition of real property would have been exempt from certain notice, bidding, and other statutory requirements.

The bill also would have allowed the Port of Harlingen Authority to impose a property tax of up to 10 cents on each \$100 valuation of taxable property in the authority for the maintenance, operation, and upkeep of the authority and the improvements constructed by the authority.

Governor's reason for veto

“House Bill 1053 has two fatal flaws: First, it would exempt the Willacy County Navigation District from competitive bidding requirements applicable to all other navigation districts, allowing it to donate, exchange, convey, sell, or lease a real property interest for less than reasonable market value and without providing public notice. This exception to the general laws of our State would unnecessarily undermine the tenets of transparency.

“Second, it would authorize the Port of Harlingen Authority to impose an ad valorem tax. The end-of-session addition of this power was not properly vetted through the legislative process and did not receive a public hearing. While likely not the intent of this bill's author or sponsor, this would set a bad example for how special districts can evade statutory and legislative oversight in the future.”

Response

Neither **Rep. Ryan Guillen**, the bill's author, nor **Sen. Eddie Lucio**, the Senate sponsor, could be reached for comment on the veto.

Notes

The HRO analysis of [HB 1053](#) appeared in the Part Two of the April 10 *Daily Floor Report*.