



AUSTIN NEWSLETTER

Texas Farm Bureau's Weekly Newsletter for the 89th Legislature

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Every Friday, this newsletter will keep you up to speed on some of the legislation important to Texas Farm Bureau members that Austin staff are following. Please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate staff with any questions.

Water

HB 4433: Relating to the requirements for obtaining an interbasin water transfer permit.

[Dean, Jay](#)

Summary:

HB 4433 strengthens the permitting process for transferring water between river basins in Texas by ensuring that any basin receiving transferred water has a clear need, alternative options have been considered, and conservation measures are in place. The bill also requires detailed reporting on water pricing, transportation costs, and environmental impact before a permit is approved.

These measures increase accountability and prevent unnecessary water diversions. It also ensures that water conservation efforts are in place before taking water from rural areas.

TFB supports HB 4433.

TFB 2025 Policy: Surface Water Section 155, Page 82, Lines 214-215.

HB 5348: Relating to acquiring real property interests for environmental mitigation required for water projects.

[Kitzman, Stan](#)

Summary:

HB 5348 amends current law to provide greater protection for landowners whose land may be targeted for environmental mitigation associated with a water supply project.

Current law mandates that if a reservoir developer is required to offset environmental impacts, the developer must first offer to voluntarily pay a landowner for an easement rather than purchasing the land outright. Under current law, the landowner may reject the offer.

HB 5348 expands that requirement to all water supply projects.

The bill also mandates that if the entity did not utilize an easement for mitigation, they must submit an explanatory report to the Texas Water Development Board detailing why an easement was not employed.

This legislation provides greater protection of private property rights by giving landowners an option to retain ownership and use of their land.

TFB supports HB 5348.

TFB 2025 Policy: Real Property Rights Section 151, Page 63, Lines 21-23.

Transportation

HB 4164 & SB 2513: Relating to notice requirements on state highway projects.
[Guillen, Ryan](#) / [West, Royce](#)

Summary:

Currently, TxDOT sends out a notice by mail to all potential landowners that may be affected by a project. HB 4164 and SB 2513 would require TxDOT to notify landowners in person if the department does not receive a response within 60 days from the date of the initial mailed notice.

This ensures landowners are notified of projects that may affect their land.

TFB supports HB 4164 and SB 2513.

TFB 2025 Policy: Highways Section 161, Page 95, Lines 27-30.

Animal Care

HB 4167: Relating to livestock brand registration expiration.
[Guillen, Ryan](#)

Summary:

HB 4167 requires a county clerk to mail a notice to livestock owners 60 days before a brand registration expires.

This change is designed to assist livestock owners in managing their brand registrations effectively and prevent a lapse that could occur due to unawareness of impending expiration dates.

TFB supports HB 4167.

2025 TFB Policy: Livestock Section 120, Page 15, Lines 7-9.

Property Rights

SB 2970: Relating to the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Program.
[Hinojosa, Adam](#)

Summary:

SB 2970 is a companion bill to [HB 2018](#) by [Rep. Trent Ashby](#) that was covered in a previous edition of the [Austin Newsletter](#). The language is identical.

SB 2970 and HB 2018 ensures that agriculture conservation easements supported by the program will have provisions that enable landowners to continue agricultural use of the land.

It also puts more of an emphasis on supporting agricultural conservation easements that conserve productive farm and ranch land. These changes will ensure clear direction on the purpose of the program to keep land in agricultural production.

TFB supports SB 2970 and HB 2018.

TFB 2025 Policy: Real Property Section 151, Page 63, Lines 16-20.

Update on Previously Reported Bills

HB 1400 & SB 718: Relating to creation of the groundwater science, research, and innovation fund to be administered by the Texas Water Development Board.
[Harris, Cody](#) / [Kolkhorst, Lois](#)

HB 1400 and SB 718 were summarized in a previous edition of the [Austin Newsletter](#).

Update:

HB 1400 was heard on Wednesday, March 19, in the House Committee on Natural Resources. Texas Farm Bureau testified in support of the bill.

The bill was voted favorably by the committee on House Natural Resources.

HJR 7: Proposing a constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund.

[Harris, Cody](#)

HJR 7 was summarized in [last week's edition of the Austin Newsletter](#).

Update:

HJR 7 was heard on Wednesday, March 19, in the House Committee on Natural Resources. Texas Farm Bureau registered in support of the bill.

The bill was voted favorably by the committee on House Natural Resources.

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