

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 414

**DATE:** April 2, 2003

**Version:** First engrossment

**Authors:** Cox and others

**Subject:** Modernizing soil and water conservation district law

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### Overview

The bill makes a lot of changes to existing soil and water conservation district law by allowing more flexibility and modernization.

#### Section

- 1** **Soil and water conservation policy.** Changes soil and water conservation policy to reflect current times and practices, including goals to protect and improve water quality.
- 2** **Soil and water conservation policy.** See section 0.
- 6 6** **Petition.** Changes the process to initiate a petition for the establishment, consolidation or division, and termination of a conservation district. Petition requirements are as follows:
  - ▶ to create: 50 resident owners (section 6);
  - ▶ to consolidate or divide: 100 resident owners (section 0);
  - ▶ to terminate: at least one percent of resident owners, not to exceed 500, or by resolution of the district board (section 0).
- 7** **Hearings.** Changes references from "land occupiers" to "eligible voters" where elections are involved (also sections 0 and 0).
- 8** **Referendum for district establishment.** Removes the state board out of the local elections process for district referendums and assigns the responsibilities to county elections officials (also sections 0, 0, 0, and 18).
- 9** **Administration of hearing and referendum.** See section 0.
- 10** **Determination after referendum.** See section 0.
- 11** **Application by supervisors to secretary of state.** See section 0.

## Section

- 12**      **Annexing additional area.** See section 0.
- 13**      **Consolidation and division of districts.** See section 6.
- 14**      **Petition for termination.** See section 6.
- 15**      **Referendum.** See section 0.
- 18 18**    **Time for election.** See section 0.
- 19**      **Supervisors elected at large.** Allows districts to have the option to establish supervisor election districts similar to the way county commissioners are elected (also sections 0, 0, and 0).
- 20**      **Supervisors elected by districts.** See section 0.
- 21**      **Members.** See section 0.
- 22**      **Terms.** See section 0.
- 23**      **Compensation.** Allows a district supervisor to receive compensation up to \$75 per day.
- 25 25**    **Comprehensive plan.** Allows district water quality improvement planning and practices.
- 26**      **Assumption of conservation projects.** See section 25.
- 27**      **Budget.** See section 30.
- 28**      **Administration of official controls.** Permits a district to accept direct delegation of soil and water official controls without the current joint powers agreement requirement.
- 30 30**    **District levies.** Authorizes district funds to be a basic operating levy and an implementation and project-match fund. Establishes a levy rate of 0.048 percent and a maximum cap of \$750,000, whichever is less. Gives each county three options for funding:
- ▶ continue out of the county levy;
  - ▶ authorizes a district new levy authority; and
  - ▶ a combination of both (also sections 0 and 33)
- 33 33**    **Special taxing districts; definitions.** See section 30.
- 34 34**    **Elected county official.** Adds soil and water conservation supervisor in definition of "elected county official" in law regarding possible removal.
- 35 35**    **Repealer.** Repeals section 103C.301 pertaining to initial election of soil and water conservation supervisors.