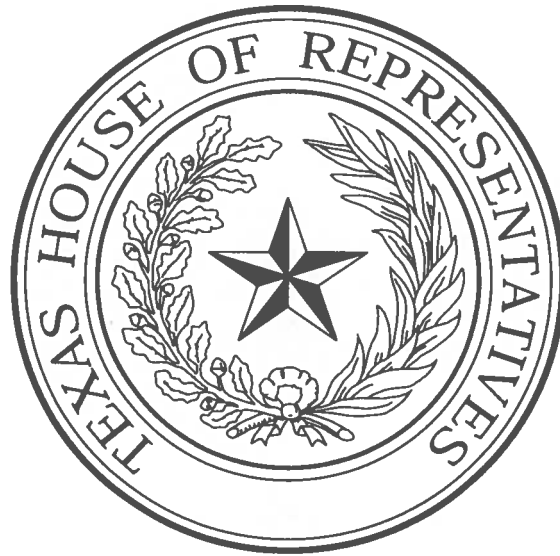


Workshop Item #1

INTERIM COMMITTEE CHARGES

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

89TH LEGISLATURE



SPEAKER DUSTIN BURROWS

MARCH 2026

ENERGY RESOURCES

1. **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation and associated rulemaking of all legislation passed by the Committee and enacted by the 89th Legislature to ensure that legislative purposes are properly implemented, including the following:
 - HB 48, relating to the creation of an organized oilfield theft prevention unit within the Texas Department of Public Safety; and
 - HB 2663, relating to the affirmation required to be made by an operator as part of an application to the Railroad Commission of Texas for an extension of the deadline for plugging an inactive well.
2. **Produced Water:** Review the utilization of produced water in Texas. Examine efforts to develop mechanisms for beneficial reuse, barriers to deployment, and other financial impediments limiting the use of produced water. Evaluate the effectiveness of recently passed legislation to address liability concerns and streamline permitting. Make recommendations to encourage greater utilization of this resource.
3. **Hydrogen:** Survey the state of the hydrogen industry in Texas. Review the Railroad Commission of Texas' Hydrogen Production Policy Council recommendations and determine whether statutory changes are necessary to improve the production, transmission, and utilization of hydrogen.
4. **Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage:** Evaluate the continued viability of commercial carbon capture, utilization, and storage in Texas. Analyze the effect of carbon capture projects on energy development and security. Evaluate relevant case law and statutes related to the ownership of pore space, operator liability, and environmental protections. Review how the recent attainment of Class VI primacy may impact the future development of carbon capture projects.
5. **Severed Well Operations:** Review the procedures and administrative rules related to severed wells and the process for an operator to resume operations after a well has been severed. Make recommendations to address any relevant safety and regulatory compliance concerns regarding severed well operations.
6. **Seismic Activity and Injection Wells:** Study the Railroad Commission of Texas' regulation of disposal and injection wells and determine whether additional measures are needed to protect public safety and critical infrastructure. Review the efficacy of current statutes, rules, and industry practices intended to mitigate seismic activity related to injection and disposal wells.

7. **P-13 Water Wells Overview:** Study the impact of environmental hazards caused by P-13 water wells. Determine the appropriate state agency best positioned to have primary regulatory authority over environmental hazards caused by discharges from P-13 water wells associated with oil and gas and mineral production. Review current and projected costs associated with managing these hazards and identify potential funding mechanisms necessary to plug such wells.
8. **Preventing Orphaned Wells:** Monitor the implementation of SB 1150 and review the administrative processes and safeguards in place to ensure inactive wells are adequately and timely plugged. Identify strategies and policy recommendations to reduce the number of inactive wells that become orphaned.
9. **Global Energy Overview:** Assess the impact of increased geopolitical uncertainty on Texas' oil and gas industry. Consider the effects of regime changes in the Middle East, the importation of Venezuelan oil, tanker traffic risks in the Strait of Hormuz, and disruptions to the international liquefied natural gas market.
10. **Agency Oversight:** Pursuant to the broad oversight responsibilities granted to the Committee under Section 301.014, Government Code, and the House Rules of Procedure, monitor the agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction, including for fraud, waste, and abuse, where applicable. The jurisdiction of the Energy Resources Committee includes the following agencies:
 - The Railroad Commission of Texas;
 - The Texas representative for the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission;
 - The Office of Interstate Mining Compact Commissioner for Texas;
 - The State Energy Conservation Office; and
 - The Office of Southern States Energy Board Member for Texas.

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. **Monitoring:** Monitor the implementation and associated rulemaking of all legislation passed by the Committee and enacted by the 89th Legislature to ensure that legislative purposes are properly implemented, including the following:
 - 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 and to provide for the allocation and use of that revenue;
 - HB 2078, relating to the joint planning of desired future conditions in groundwater management areas;
 - SB 7, relating to the oversight and financing of certain water infrastructure matters under the jurisdiction of the Texas Water Development Board; and
 - SB 1169, relating to the provision of water or sewer service by public entities operating jointly or concurrently.

2. **Groundwater Management:** Study groundwater regulation and make recommendations to ensure groundwater management is adequately focused on protecting the long-term viability of the state's aquifers. Specifically address:
 - If desired future conditions provide sufficient protection of groundwater resources, and whether impediments to achieving desired future conditions exist;
 - The adequacy of groundwater conservation districts' authority to address impacts from large-scale groundwater production projects, including export projects;
 - The need for increased investment in groundwater data and modeling tools to support advanced planning, decision-making, and management; and
 - How groundwater production in unregulated portions of the state impacts the aquifer management efforts of existing groundwater conservation districts.

3. **Innovative Water Supply Strategies:** Study the feasibility of the various project types eligible under the New Water Supply for Texas Fund. Identify project impediments and strategies to increase their implementation and contribution to the state's overall water supply.

4. **Brackish Groundwater Production:** Monitor the status of brackish groundwater production zone (BGPZ) designations by the Texas Water Development Board and the development of brackish groundwater projects within designated BGPZs. Study the adequacy of scientific understanding of the use and development of brackish aquifers, including a review of current regulatory measures and monitoring requirements to encourage the use of brackish groundwater while ensuring that fresh groundwater resources are preserved and protected.

5. **Data Center Water Use and Conservation:** Examine the total water usage of data center operations in Texas, including direct and indirect uses. Evaluate regulatory, permitting, and infrastructure considerations for water-efficient data center development, particularly in water-stressed regions. Consider policy options to optimize water resources and enhance water stewardship in the data center sector.
6. **Program Capacity:** Assess the capacity of existing state and federal water infrastructure financial assistance programs, including the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas. Evaluate strategies to leverage the dedicated revenue stream established by Proposition 4 (HJR 7, 89th Regular Session) to meet identified capital needs and develop recommendations to mitigate any possible short-term funding shortfalls.
7. **Regional Water Planning:** Study the state and regional water planning process, data used to project long-term water needs and available water supplies, criteria used to adopt water supply projects and management strategies, and progress made to address water supply deficits described within the most recent state water plan. Make recommendations to improve the state and regional water planning process.
8. **Rio Grande Compact:** Evaluate the impact of groundwater pumping in southern New Mexico on the availability of surface water supply in the El Paso region. Study the history and merit of claims made by the State of Texas arising from the 1938 Rio Grande Compact and evaluate the Compact Decree pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. Determine if the Compact Decree fairly provides for Texas to receive from New Mexico its equitable apportionment of water. Identify any additional areas of dispute arising from the Rio Grande Compact left unresolved by the Compact Decree.
9. **Agency Oversight:** Pursuant to the broad oversight responsibilities granted to the Committee under Section 301.014, Government Code, and the House Rules of Procedure, monitor the agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction, including for fraud, waste, and abuse, where applicable. The jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Committee includes the following agencies:
 - The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality as it relates to the regulation of water resources;
 - The Office of Canadian River Compact Commissioner for Texas;
 - The Office of Pecos River Compact Commissioner for Texas;
 - The Office of Red River Compact Commissioner for Texas;
 - The Office of Rio Grande Compact Commissioner for Texas;
 - The Office of Sabine River Compact Commissioners for Texas;
 - The Southwestern States Water Commission; and
 - The Texas Water Development Board.



Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

2026 Interim Legislative Charges:

Business and Commerce Committee
Criminal Justice Committee
Economic Development Committee
Education Committee
Finance Committee
Health and Human Services Committee
Higher Education Committee
Select Committee on Homeland and Border Security
Local Government Committee
Natural Resources Committee
Select Committee on Religious Liberty
State Affairs Committee
Transportation Committee
Select Committee on Veteran Affairs Committee
Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs Committee

March 27, 2026

Water, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs Committee

- **Assessing the Water Demands of Energy-Intensive Technologies:** Examine the current water consumption rates for high-consumption cooling technologies, including data centers. Make recommendations to improve transparency for local water providers and ensure industrial growth does not compromise the affordability of water for Texas residents and agricultural producers.
- **Safeguarding the Texas Livestock Industry:** Examine the state's preparedness and response strategies regarding the New World Screwworm (NWS). Evaluate the effectiveness of current surveillance, monitoring, and control efforts by the Texas Animal Health Commission and partner agencies to prevent reintroduction of NWS into Texas. Make recommendations to strengthen biosecurity protocols, improve coordination with federal and international partners, and ensure the long-term protection of the Texas livestock industry and wildlife populations.
- **Prioritizing Utility Revenue for Infrastructure Maintenance:** Study the practice of large municipalities transferring revenue from water and wastewater utilities to general funds. Assess the impact of such transfers on delays in projects, infrastructure maintenance backlogs, and water loss mitigation. Make recommendations to limit the percentage of utility revenue available for transfer and ensure ratepayer funds are dedicated exclusively to the sustainability and security of Texas water systems.
- **Evaluating Desalination Viability and Regulatory Efficiency:** Inventory existing facilities and review the permitting framework across relevant state agencies to improve efficiency. Assess the practicality of desalination in high-feasibility regions and identify opportunities for local-level implementation. Make recommendations to streamline the regulatory process.