

Texas Water Politics

*Water Issues during the 85th Regular
Session of the Texas Legislature*

Interim Charges

- There are two water-related Senate interim charges:
 - Study and make recommendations regarding the ownership, production, and transfer of **surface water** and **groundwater** in the State of Texas.
 - Study and make recommendations on improving the process of developing and executing the **State Water Plan**.

Stakeholder Meetings

- My focus this interim has been to identify problems in the Water Code and ways to fix them.
- To do that, my staff and I spent much of last winter and spring meeting with stakeholders.
- What I learned during those meetings informed the decisions I made regarding the subject matter and invited testimony of interim hearings.

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Interim Hearings

- During this past summer, the committee held three water-related interim hearings, where it received nearly 20 hours of testimony from more than 60 expert witnesses.
- Each hearing had its own theme.
 - May 23: Surface water
 - June 20: Regional water planning
 - July 25: Groundwater

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Surface Water Interim Hearing

- At the surface water interim hearing, the committee heard testimony on the following surface water issues:
 - Surface water permitting;
 - Water availability models;
 - Interbasin transfers; and
 - Storm water flood control.
- These issues were identified during my meetings with stakeholders.

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Water Planning Interim Hearing

- At the water planning interim hearing, the committee heard testimony on the following water planning issues:
 - Frequency of the state water plan;
 - Water conservation and drought contingency;
 - SWIFT; and
 - Desired Future Conditions, Modeled Available Groundwater, and regional water planning.
- These issues were identified during my meetings with stakeholders.

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First appeared as part of the conference materials for the
2016 Texas Water Law Institute session

"Texas Legislature: Water Issues in the 85th"