

CASE 83rd Legislative Update Member Meeting Recap

We cannot thank our event Keynote, Representative Callegari, enough for hosting our event and providing opening remarks for our CASE Legislative update on March 20, 2013, at the Robert E. Johnson Conference Center. CASE Members in attendance also received an in-depth update from both Trey Lary and Billy Phenix on current action and activity at the 83rd Texas Legislative Session, especially relating to bills affecting water districts.

Probably the most important takeaway for our members was the call-to-action all three of our guests gave the CASE membership, and the vast and diverse communities we represent. They each encouraged our members to engage with our local representatives, and to weigh in on the bills that could affect our local districts. Below, we provide a link to all bills affecting local water districts, as well as the means to contact your representatives.

Topics covered ranged from local jurisdictional cooperation, water loss audits, copper theft, drought prevention and landscape regulations to support drought preparedness. But the main focus centered on a review and update of the specific legislature affecting Water Districts.

Below are the highlights that our guests recommended our organization monitor the progression. We have an embedded link below with more in-depth coverage of what bills have been filed, including links to the progress of each piece, but here are the ones we will be following:

- HB168 and its partner bill SB902 both serve to correct operational issues with water districts. (According to our speakers, this is local and uncontested and likely to pass, if it hadn't by press time.)
- HB2704, sponsored by our guest, Rep. Callegari, relates to the electronic submission of bids for construction contracts for certain conservation and reclamation districts. This basically eases the process on bid acceptance and allows for electronic submittals.
- HB824, also sponsored by Rep. Callegari, relates to a volume-based exemption from reporting requirements for accidental spills or discharges from wastewater. This means the reporting requirements ease slightly for accidental small discharges and spills.
- HB14 and its partner bill SB14, sponsored by Williams and Pitts, will be one our memberships will want to track. These two bills relate to increasing fiscal transparency, and the reporting and accountability of entities like our membership. Including further in-depth self-evaluation and public input and reporting processes, lengthier and potentially more expensive audit procedures, and ballot language requirements based on measurements that don't accurately allow for correct comparisons. We encourage our members to review this legislation, and contact your representatives on modification options. Our guests informed us that local Rep. Donna Howard was very involved and looking to hear from constituents on the effects of the passage of this bill.
- HB3049, Sponsored by Rep. Springer relates to the abolishment of all May election dates, forcing all local elections to occur in November.
- HB3708, Sponsored by Rep. Klick, relates to rules governing the meetings of general law districts of the Texas Water Code. Potentially resulting in changes to how MUDs can conduct smaller meetings, such as committee meetings, and requiring all of these to be public and posted under the same Open Meetings Act rules that our current full boards perform.
- HB738, Sponsored by Rep. Crownover, relates to the review and creation of certain proposed MUDs by County Commissioner Courts.

- HB1307 (Rep. Geren) and HB1600 (Rep. Cook), are very similar in nature, and relate to the continuation and function between the PUC and the transfer of responsibilities from the TCEQ, and how and who oversees what areas of decision-making.
- SB1482, Sponsored by Sen. Watson, relates to the issuance of a public security. Meaning that local entities, such as MUDs, can now negotiate bond sales, rather than just a bid process.

Each Municipal Utility District has a process for how they will discuss this information this information and facilitate any action. We strongly encourage our members to engage with your board as well as your constituent representatives in your local official's office. They are here to hear from you and enact legislation on your, their constituents', behalf.

For more information on the above mentioned legislation, or a more in-depth look to all bills filed relating to Water Districts, please visit our website and download our interactive [83rd Legislative Guide](#). There you will find ways to review the bills submitted, contact information for your elected officials and their offices, and lastly a means to track each piece of legislation's progress to passage.

Thanks to our food and beverage providers, local businesses, Kenny's Coffee (<http://kennyscoffeeco.com/>) and In Good Taste Catering (<http://www.goodtastecatering.info/>) for our amazing espresso and sinfully delicious desserts! And most especially, thank you to our members who attended, we hope the afternoon was insightful and a useful resource for your members

One more item...

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR THE 10th ANNUAL CASE SUMMER CONFERENCE! Check your inbox in the upcoming days for registration forms, speaker announcements, conference details, and ways to underwrite and sponsor this year's events. We cannot continue to provide our members valuable updates and information without our supporters! Register to attend, as well as become a CASE Ace or Conference Sponsor/Underwriter today!