



SIERRA CLUB

LONE STAR CHAPTER

Testimony for House Bill 1565

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Contact: Alex Ortiz, alex.ortz@sierraclub.org

Dear Chairman King, Vice Chairman Thompson, and members of the committee,

The Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter supports HB 1565. The Sierra Club is the nation's oldest conservation organization, and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club has been actively engaged in Texas water and wildlife issues since its inception.

We sincerely thank the Sunset Advisory Commission, Sunset staff, and Rep. Canales for all of your hard work on this bill. We especially applaud Section 5 of the bill, **allowing a regional water planning group to plan for a drought worse than the drought of record.**

Similar to the adoption of this recommendation is the management action that the Sunset Advisory Commission adopted that directs the Texas Water Development Board to consult with the Office of the State Climatologist in preparation of state and regional water plans. We would **strongly support seeing this management action reflected in statute**, with a clear statutory requirement that the agency consult with the Office of the State Climatologist in preparation of these plans to make sure there is significant incorporation of projected climate change-related water impacts.

Moreover, we appreciate the feasibility review of certain projects as laid out in Section 4 of the bill; but we also offer that in such a feasibility review, TWDB should also consider potential environmental impacts. Consideration of potential major environmental impacts prior to funding may ultimately result in less state funding spent on litigation and/or contested case hearings at other agencies if TWDB can ultimately determine that such a project is infeasible for environmental concerns. Environmental concerns are also intrinsically tied to many of the TWDB's primary functions, such as evaluating water supply and flood control, so the relevant initial expertise already exists within the agency and is linked to potential mitigation costs.

Sierra Club sincerely appreciates the opportunity to make these comments.

Alex Ortiz
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