HB 4758 by Lopez would amend the Water Code to require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to provide notice of an assessed administrative penalty to a member of the Texas Legislature that represents an area where the violation for which the agency has assessed the administrative penalty has occurred. As such the bill increase transparency on when and where administrative penalties have been assessed and allow representatives and senators to be aware of how industry and local government is performing in their district.

This is important on both fronts. If city or county government is not following the law -- sometimes due to lack of funding or attention on failing water, solid waste or wastewater systems -- awareness by members of the Legislature is important.

In terms of industry, members of the legislature have a right to know if industry is complying with the law, and to assure that industry is playing by the rules. This can lead to important improvements in the environment and public health. In addition, in the rare case where perhaps the TCEQ was unfairly applying the law, assure they get due process is a role Senator and Representatives can also provide.