

Bill Summary
1st Session of the 59th Legislature

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Author:
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SB 915
HASB
Sen. Green
05/20/2025

Bill Analysis

SB 915 requires commercial solar energy facilities constructed on land owned by the Commissioners of the Land Office on and after the effective date to be constructed on permanent grass that is suitable for livestock grazing and allow for the grazing of livestock. The measure provides the owners of such land immunity to liability for any damage to the facility caused by livestock. Such facilities must construct the panels at least 8 feet high from the lowest point of the solar panel and to provide at least 25 feet of space between each row of panels. Such panels must be setback at least 500 yards from the nearest point on the outside wall of the nearest occupied residence and provide optimal runoff flow. The resident may waive this 500 yard setback requirement. The measure provides such facilities shall be liable for all soil erosion occurring along the land with the installed panels. The measure requires any land owned by the Commissioners that has commercial solar energy facility to be made available for lease by another party for the purposes of livestock grazing. The owners of such facilities shall be required to pay ad valorem taxes and any other assessments due upon the improvements or structures of the commercial solar energy facility. The payment shall be made no later than December 31 of each year. Leasing agreements offered to a landowner by an operator of a solar energy facility shall offer the same provisions outlined above to the landowner. The provisions of this measure shall apply to 10 megawatt and larger solar energy and associated battery storage facilities and not to any project that the Commissioners has a lease with prior to the effective date.

House Amendments

HA's to SB 915 increases the height requirement from 6 feet to 8 feet and the setback requirement from 300 yards to 500 yards. The HA's add language relating to owners of a residence waiving the setback requirement. Land used by such facilities owned by the Commissioners must also be made available for grazing. The HA's also require such facilities to pay ad valorem taxes. The HA's specify the provisions of the measure shall apply to 10 megawatt and larger solar energy facilities and not to any project that the Commissioners has a lease with prior to the effective date.

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