

SUBJECT: Licensing animal export-import facilities; authorizing fees and penalties

COMMITTEE: Agriculture and Livestock — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 5 ayes — Springer, Buckley, Burns, Fierro, Raymond

0 nays

4 absent — Anderson, Beckley, Meza, Zwiener

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — Dan Hunter, Texas Department of Agriculture

DIGEST: HB 1563 would grant the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) the exclusive authority to license animal export-import facilities, which are facilities located in Texas and authorized under federal rules governing the exportation of live animals and that have the capacity to handle animals for transportation in international trade.

TDA would have to adopt rules that provide for:

- requirements to obtain and renew a license;
- standards governing a license holder's operation of a facility necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare and the safety of animals held by a facility;
- fees for license issuance and renewal in amounts necessary to fund the license program; and
- a schedule of sanctions for violations of the bill.

A person would be prohibited from operating an animal export-import facility in this state without a license issued by TDA.

TDA could impose an administrative penalty not to exceed \$5,000 or an administrative sanction, including license suspension or revocation, for a violation of the bill or rules adopted under the bill.

Government entities operating animal export-import facilities would be exempt from fees levied under this bill.

The license requirement and enforcement provisions would apply beginning 90 days after the bill's effective date.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.