

- SUBJECT:** Agreement with nonprofit foundation to maintain the Battleship Texas
- COMMITTEE:** Culture, Recreation and Tourism — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Cyrier, Martinez, Bucy, Gervin-Hawkins, Holland, Jarvis Johnson, Kacal, Morrison, Toth
- 0 nays
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 11— 31-0
- WITNESSES:** For —Tony Gregory, Battleship Texas Foundation; Walter West, Republican Party of Texas; Aldo Benavides, Valkor; Susan Giacona; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Bruce Bramlett, Battleship Texas Foundation; Quint Balkcom, Game Warden Peace Officers Association; John Shepperd, Texas Foundation for Conservation, Texas Coalition for Conservation; Janie Dishongh; Arthur Simon; Ruth York)
- Against — None
- On — Brent Leisure, Texas Parks and Wildlife; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jessica Davisson, Texas Parks and Wildlife; Gerald Stoneham)
- BACKGROUND:** Parks and Wildlife Code sec. 22.261 places the Battleship "Texas" under the jurisdiction of the Texas Park and Wildlife Department.
- The Battleship "Texas" is the only remaining battleship to have participated in World War I and World War II and is considered an important historical asset to Texas and its people. Concerns have been raised that the battleship's current condition has become a challenge for the state and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to properly address.
- DIGEST:** SB 1511 would require the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) enter into a memorandum of understanding with an appropriate nonprofit foundation for the operation and maintenance of the Battleship "Texas."

The memorandum of understanding would be for a term of 99 years and would have to include provisions that:

- governed the preservation, management, and operation for the Battleship "Texas" consistent with the Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects with Guidelines for Applying the Standards published by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior;
- required the nonprofit to consult with the state historic preservation officer on matters related to the preservation or repair of the battleship; and
- protected the public's interest in maintaining and preserving a priceless historical asset in a manner that ensured the public had access to the battleship and an opportunity to provide comment on its preservation.

TPWD would be required to enter into the memorandum of understanding no later than the later of September 1, 2019, or 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.