

SUBJECT: Waiving fishing license fees for residents 85 years old or over

COMMITTEE: Culture, Recreation and Tourism — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — K. King, Gervin-Hawkins, Burns, Clardy, Frullo, Israel, Krause, Martinez, C. Morales

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

On — John Shepperd, Texas Foundation for Conservation; Justin Halvorsen, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

BACKGROUND: Parks and Wildlife Code sec. 46.004(c) requires the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to waive the resident fishing license fee for a qualified disabled veteran or a Texas resident on active military duty.

Some have suggested that waiving fishing license fees could reduce barriers for seniors with limited income to participate in a healthy outdoor activity.

DIGEST: HB 559 would require the Parks and Wildlife Commission to waive the resident fishing license fee for Texas residents who are 85 years old or over.

The Parks and Wildlife Department would not be required to issue a refund for any fishing license issued before the bill's effective date.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021, and would apply only to a fee charged for a fishing license issued on or after that date.