

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 854
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Natural Resources
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, the State of Texas does not publish a list of noxious plant species, defined as plants that have serious potential to cause economic harm or ecological damage. As proposed, S.B. 854 authorizes the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to publish a list of noxious species. In publishing the list, TDA is required to consult with representatives from certain entities that will provide data to create a scientifically-based list. Upon the creation of a noxious plant species list, a person commits an offense if the person sells, distributes, or imports a plant on the list. The offense would be a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Agriculture in SECTION 1 (Section 71.151, Agriculture Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 71, Agriculture Code, by adding Subchapter D, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. NOXIOUS PLANTS

Sec. 71.151. STATEWIDE LIST. (a) Requires the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), by rule, to publish a list of noxious plant species that have serious potential to cause economic or ecological harm to the state.

(b) Requires TDA, in preparing or amending the list, to consult with representatives from certain entities.

Sec. 71.152. NOXIOUS PLANT SALE, DISTRIBUTION, OR IMPORTATION PROHIBITED. (a) Provides that a person commits an offense if the person sells, distributes, or imports into the state a noxious plant species included on TDA's list described under Section 71.151.

(b) Provides that an offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

(c) Provides that a person commits a separate offense for each noxious plant item or unit sold, distributed, or imported.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2003.