

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
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### **DIGEST**

Texas is blessed with a wealth of saltwater and freshwater fishing opportunities, and recreational fishing is one of the most popular outdoor sporting activities in the state. Generating millions of dollars and enjoyed by people of all ages, recreational fishing makes a substantial contribution to local and state economies as well as to the quality of life in Texas. High-quality fishing can be found in the state's bays and estuaries and other coastal waters, where the availability of fish has never been better, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Rod and reel anglers strongly support TPWD's fisheries management regulations, including minimum size requirements, bag limits, and gear restrictions, and these conservation efforts have been successful. The support of rod and reel anglers, who are committed to preserving and enhancing water quality in oceans, bays, and estuaries, is also important to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). TPWD and TCEQ have not found it necessary to restrict recreational fishing in marine waters because there has never been a clear indication that fishing was the cause of a specific conservation problem. Some state agencies may base regulations on studies that do not consider the economic impact of recommendations; in the case of proposed fishing or boating restrictions, the economic impact to coastal communities could be severe. Ongoing studies of bays and estuaries are under the auspices of TPWD, TCEQ, and the Texas Water Development Board, which shares jurisdiction over freshwater inflows into bays and estuaries with TPWD.

### **PURPOSE**

Provides that the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby directs the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to exclude consideration or promotion of any study or plan that recommends restrictions on recreational fishing areas. Provides that the 78th Legislature also direct the three agencies to require bay and estuary studies to include the economic impact to coastal communities with any proposal to restrict fishing or boating in those areas. Provides that the secretary of state forward an official copy of this resolution to the executive directors of the TPWD and TCEQ and to the executive administrator of TWDB.