

By: West

S.B. No. 1742

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to authorizing certain nature centers to charge admission fees.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle C, Title 10, Local Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 336 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 336. NATURE CENTERS

Sec. 336.001. AUTHORITY OF CERTAIN NATURE CENTERS TO CHARGE ADMISSION FEE. (a) In this section, "nature center" means a geologically or environmentally unique undeveloped property of at least 30-50 acres that has been assembled for the purpose of preserving this geology or habitat, that provides passive or low-impact recreational activities like hiking, that has limited development, and that offers educational programs.

(b) This section applies only in a county with a population of 1.8 million or more.

(c) The board of directors of a not-for-profit entity that maintains county and municipal park property as a nature center under a formal agreement may charge an admission fee for entrance onto or use of the county and municipal property. Any fee must be approved each year by the county and the municipality.

(d) Fees collected under this section may be used only to provide educational programs conducted on, to maintain, or to construct improvements to the county and municipal property.

1       (e) Fees collected under this section shall be audited  
2 annually by an independent auditor. All audit reports shall be  
3 submitted to the county and the municipality on completion.

4       SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
5 a vote of two-thirds of all of the members elected to each house, as  
6 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
7 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
8 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.