

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1384  
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Urban Affairs  
Committee Report (Amended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Nature centers described in H.B. 1384 need supplemental funding to ensure that adequate resources are available to maintain the property's acreage and many trails and to provide an adequate level of operation for the safety and comfort of visitors.

H.B. 1384 allows the board of directors of a not-for-profit entity that maintains a nature center described in the bill to charge an admission fee. The bill does not affect primary funding for the operation and management of such a nature center.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1384 amends the Local Government Code to add provisions that apply only in a county with a population of 1.8 million or more. The bill authorizes 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 to charge an admission fee for entrance onto or use of the county and municipal property. The bill requires any fee to be approved each year by the county and the municipality, and requires the fees collected to be used only to provide educational programs conducted on, to maintain, or to construct improvements to the county and municipal property. The bill requires the fees collected to be audited annually by an independent auditor, and requires all audit reports to be submitted to the county and the municipality on completion. The bill defines "nature center" to mean a property with limited development, or an undeveloped property, that is at least 30 acres but not more than 50 acres; has been dedicated to preserving a unique geological or environmental feature, including a habitat; allows passive or low-impact outdoor recreation, such as hiking; and offers educational programs.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

### **EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS**

Committee Amendment No. 1:

H.B. 1384 is amended to remove from the definition of "nature center" the specification limiting property in a nature center to not more than 50 acres.