

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2993
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Agriculture & Livestock
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties believe that certain methods and practices concerning the production of game animal meat lack sufficient oversight and that, as a result, the game animal meat industry should come under review to eliminate health and safety concerns. As game animal meat becomes more prevalent and its consumption becomes more widespread, the parties assert that the industry needs to be standardized and regulated to ensure safety and quality. Many other parties, however, strongly counter these assertions. In response to both of these viewpoints, H.B. 2993 seeks to gather interested parties to study and examine trends in the commercially raised game animal meat industry in Texas in order to make recommendations.

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. 2993 creates the game animal meat safety task force consisting of nine members, including three members of the public who have demonstrated a high level of knowledge on the issue of game animal meat safety appointed by the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives, respectively, as well as the chairs of certain house and senate committees. The bill requires the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives to appoint the public members of the task force not later than December 1, 2013. The bill establishes that a task force member is not entitled to compensation for the services provided as a task force member but authorizes a task force member to receive reimbursement for the member's actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force duties subject to availability of funds. The bill designates the task force's co-presiding officers and sets out certain requirements for meetings and hearings.

H.B. 2993 requires the task force to study and examine trends in the commercially raised game meat industry in Texas, including the current regulations and safeguards regarding game meat, and the differences in the inspection of game meats compared to the inspection of traditional meats, including beef, pork, and poultry, and to develop a short-term and a long-term commercially raised game animal food safety plan to strengthen safeguards for commercially raised native and nonnative wildlife game animals. The bill requires the task force to submit the safety plans to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives not later than December 1, 2014.

H.B. 2993 abolishes the task force and sets the bill's provisions to expire January 1, 2015.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.