

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1978
By: Lucio
Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that protein is an in-demand food bank item and that programs that provide hunters with a way to donate legally harvested deer to local food assistance providers help provide protein to food banks, help landowners manage deer populations, help promote environmental stewardship, and offer a meaningful way for hunters to help their communities. S.B. 1978 seeks to encourage these efforts.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Parks and Wildlife Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1978 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to authorize a person applying for a hunting license of any type under statutory general hunting license provisions to contribute \$1 or more to a nonprofit organization, designated by the Parks and Wildlife Commission, whose purposes include the administration of a statewide program that provides hunters with a way to donate legally harvested deer to local food assistance providers. The bill requires the commission, not later than September 15, 2015, to designate a nonprofit organization to receive the donations. The bill requires the program to include the recruitment of meat processors who, for a nominal fee to cover processing costs, process and package the venison and contact the food assistance providers to pick up the venison.

S.B. 1978 requires the Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to include space on each application for a hunting license that allows a person applying for the license to indicate the amount that the person is voluntarily contributing to the nonprofit organization and requires TPWD to provide an opportunity for a person to contribute to the nonprofit organization during the application process for a hunting license on the TPWD website. The bill requires TPWD, after deducting TPWD's administrative costs, to hold in trust the remainder of the amount a person contributes to the nonprofit organization and, not later than November 1 of each year, to send the money held in trust to the nonprofit organization. The bill restricts the use of money received by the nonprofit organization to the administration, operation, support, and promotion of the program.

S.B. 1978 requires the nonprofit organization to submit an annual report to the legislature and TPWD that includes the total dollar amount of contributions received by the organization from the voluntary contributions. The bill authorizes the commission to adopt rules to implement the

bill's provisions, including rules related to processes for the selection, inspection, and periodic review of the nonprofit organization.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.