

By: Phelan

H.B. No. 1979

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 1979:

By: Larson

C.S.H.B. No. 1979

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to a bag limit exemption for certain participants in
3 certain fishing tournaments in Chambers, Jefferson, Galveston,
4 Hardin, Newton, and Orange Counties; authorizing a fee.

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

6 SECTION 1. Title 7, Parks and Wildlife Code, is amended by
7 adding Chapter 290 to read as follows:

8 CHAPTER 290. CHAMBERS, JEFFERSON, GALVESTON, HARDIN, NEWTON, AND
9 ORANGE COUNTIES

10 Sec. 290.001. BAG LIMIT EXEMPTIONS FOR CERTAIN FISHING
11 TOURNAMENTS. (a) In this section, "fishing tournament" has the
12 meaning assigned by Section 66.023.

13 (b) This section applies only to a fishing tournament that:
14 (1) is held on the southern stretches of the Sabine or
15 Neches River, in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, or in the Gulf of
16 Mexico as those bodies of water lie within or are adjacent to the
17 following counties:

18 (A) Chambers County;

19 (B) Jefferson County;

20 (C) Galveston County;

21 (D) Hardin County;

22 (E) Newton County; and

23 (F) Orange County; and

24 (2) has as its participants only competitors who

1 attend high school or college.

2 (c) The department shall grant a permit for a bag limit
3 exemption under this section to a fishing tournament if the
4 organizer of the fishing tournament submits to the department:

5 (1) a complete application on a form supplied by the
6 department; and

7 (2) a fee in the amount of \$500.

8 (d) A permit issued under Subsection (c) must state the
9 terms of the exemption and the dates for which the exemption is
10 valid. The organizer of the tournament shall distribute a copy of
11 the permit to all participants.

12 (e) A permit issued under this section shall allow a
13 participant in a fishing tournament to count toward the
14 participant's bag limit for largemouth bass a fish that is smaller
15 than the applicable minimum size limit by not more than two inches
16 if, at the time the fish are inspected for the purpose of
17 determining compliance with the bag limit, the participant has in
18 the participant's possession a copy of the permit.

19 (f) A fish counted under this section must be released after
20 weighing.

21 (g) The commission shall adopt rules to implement this
22 section.

23 (h) The department shall deposit money received for the
24 purchase of a permit under Subsection (c) to the credit of the game,
25 fish, and water safety account.

26 SECTION 2. Chapter 290, Parks and Wildlife Code, as added by
27 this Act, applies only to a fishing tournament held on or after the

1 effective date of this Act.

2 SECTION 3. (a) The legal notice of the intention to
3 introduce this Act, setting forth the general substance of this
4 Act, has been published as provided by law, and the notice and a
5 copy of this Act have been furnished to all persons, agencies,
6 officials, or entities to which they are required to be furnished
7 under Section 59, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, and Chapter 313,
8 Government Code.

9 (b) The governor, one of the required recipients, has
10 submitted the notice and Act to the Texas Commission on
11 Environmental Quality.

12 (c) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has filed
13 its recommendations relating to this Act with the governor, the
14 lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of
15 representatives within the required time.

16 (d) All requirements of the constitution and laws of this
17 state and the rules and procedures of the legislature with respect
18 to the notice, introduction, and passage of this Act are fulfilled
19 and accomplished.

20 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
21 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
22 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
23 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
24 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.