

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 87TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**March 28, 2021**

**TO:** Honorable Ken King, Chair, House Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism

**FROM:** Jerry McGinty, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB409** by Cortez (Relating to waivers for entrance fees to state parks and certain hunting and fishing license fees for resident first responders.), **As Introduced**

**Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for HB409, As Introduced :** an impact of \$0 through the biennium ending August 31, 2023.

The legislation would waive entrance fees to state parks for certain Texas residents which would result in an estimated two-year negative impact of \$1,296,000 to General Revenue-Dedicated Funds through the biennium ending August 31, 2023.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

**General Revenue-Related Funds, Five- Year Impact:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<b>Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</b>
2022	\$0
2023	\$0
2024	\$0
2025	\$0
2026	\$0

**All Funds, Five-Year Impact:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<b>Probable Revenue (Loss) from State Parks Acct 64</b>	<b>Probable Revenue (Loss) from Game, Fish, Water Safety Ac 9</b>
2022	(\$54,000)	(\$590,000)
2023	(\$55,000)	(\$597,000)
2024	(\$56,000)	(\$605,000)
2025	(\$56,000)	(\$612,000)
2026	(\$57,000)	(\$620,000)

**Fiscal Analysis**

The bill would amend the Parks and Wildlife Code to require the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to waive entrance fees to state parks and to waive the fee for a hunting and/or fishing license for first responders with 20 years of continuous service or a service connected disability rating of 50 percent or more.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

### **Methodology**

According to TPWD, the average state park entrance fee is \$5. State park entrance fee revenue is deposited to the credit of General Revenue-Dedicated State Parks Account No. 64 (GR-D 64). Based on state park visitation numbers maintained by TPWD, in fiscal year 2020, 7,316,998 people visited state parks. This amounts to approximately 25 percent of the Texas population based on the most recent U.S. Census data. TPWD is unable to estimate the number of first responders with a disability rating of 50 percent or more, but assumes the number to be minimal. Based on data from the Texas Commission on Fire Protection, the Department of State Health Services, and the Commission on Law Enforcement, TPWD estimates there are 42,206 first responders in Texas with 20 years of service. Assuming 25 percent of those first responders, or 10,552 individuals, visit state parks each year at \$5 per person, the anticipated revenue loss to GR-D 64 would be \$52,760.

Revenue from hunting and fishing licenses is deposited to the credit of General Revenue-Dedicated Game, Fish and Water Safety Account No. 9 (GR-D 9). TPWD assumes that 30 percent of the first responder population, or 12,662 individuals, engages in activities that require the purchase of a hunting or fishing license. TPWD reports that the weighted average of hunting and fishing licenses is \$46, and the loss of 12,662 licenses at that price would equate to a revenue loss of \$582,452 to GR-D 9.

Amounts reflected in the table above are built on the analysis discussed above and include an anticipated population growth estimated by the Comptroller of Public accounts to project revenue loss for future years.

Based on information provided by TPWD and the Comptroller of Public Accounts, it is assumed that duties and responsibilities associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be accomplished utilizing existing resources.

### **Local Government Impact**

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

**Source Agencies:** 304 Comptroller of Public Accounts, 802 Parks and Wildlife Department

**LBB Staff:** JMc, AJL, MW, PBO