

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R25147 BEE-F

C.S.S.B. 2843
By: Perry
Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs
4/22/2025
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 2843 directs the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to conduct a comprehensive study of current measures to control chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer. The study will review existing practices, compare Texas' approach with those of other states, and explore whether certain deer genetics may offer resistance to the disease. This effort is designed to pinpoint areas for improvement in managing CWD, thereby protecting Texas' deer populations, hunting traditions, and overall wildlife health.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 2843 amends current law relating to a study of effectiveness of rules and policies implemented by the Parks and Wildlife Department to manage and contain chronic wasting diseases and of cervid resistance to chronic wasting disease.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. Defines "chronic wasting disease" and "department."

SECTION 2. STUDY RELATING TO CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE. (a) Requires the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (college), the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine (school), and The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute (institute), using existing resources, in conjunction with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), to conduct a study assessing the effectiveness of rules and policies implemented by TPWD to manage and contain chronic wasting diseases and cervid resistance to chronic wasting disease.

(b) Requires that the study required by Subsection (a) of this section, to the extent practicable, include:

- (1) a comparative analysis of the applicable rules and policies implemented by TPWD and the agencies of other states responsible for managing and containing chronic wasting disease;
- (2) an assessment of the benefits and deficiencies of the applicable rules and policies;
- (3) a comparative analysis of cervid genotypes to determine resistance to chronic wasting disease; and
- (4) scientific and statistical data relevant to Subdivisions (1)-(3) of this subsection.

SECTION 3. PUBLIC INPUT REQUIRED. Requires TPWD, in conducting the study required under Section 2(a) of this Act, to:

- (1) hold a hearing in a publicly accessible location to provide a public forum for the submission of written and oral comments from members of the public regarding the applicable rules and policies;
- (2) for not less than 60 days, provide an online portal on the TPWD's Internet website through which members of the public may submit comments regarding the applicable rules and policies; and
- (3) respond to each public comment submitted during the hearing required by Subdivision (1) of this section or through the online portal required by Subdivision (2) of this section.

SECTION 4. REPORT. (a) Requires the college, the school, and the institute, not later than December 1, 2026, to provide a report of the study's findings to TPWD, the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, each member of the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over wildlife matters.

- (b) Requires the college, the school, and the institute to make the report required by Subsection (a) of this section available to any member of the legislature or any member of the public on request and at no cost to the requestor.

SECTION 5. EXPIRATION. Provides that this Act expires May 31, 2027.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. Effective date: September 1, 2025.