

By: Metcalf

H.B. No. 5458

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a study of the effectiveness of rules implemented by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department governing the management of chronic wasting disease and of cervid resistance to chronic wasting disease.

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

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS. In this Act:

(1) "Chronic wasting disease" means a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy infecting cervids.

(2) "Department" means the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

SECTION 2. STUDY OF RULES AND POLICIES RELATING TO CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE REQUIRED. (a) Using existing resources, the department shall conduct a study assessing the effectiveness of all agency rules and policies pertaining to the containment and management of chronic wasting disease.

(b) The study required by Subsection (a) shall, to the extent practicable:

(1) include a comparative analysis of the applicable rules and policies implemented by the department and agencies of other state governments responsible for containing and managing chronic wasting disease;

(2) assess the overall benefits and deficiencies of the applicable rules and policies;

1 (3) include a comparative analysis of cervid genotypes
2 to determine resistance to chronic wasting disease; and

3 (4) incorporate scientific and statistical data.

4 SECTION 3. PUBLIC INPUT REQUIRED. In conducting the study
5 required under Section 2(a), the department shall:

6 (1) hold a hearing in a publicly accessible location
7 to provide a public forum for the submission of written and oral
8 testimony from members of the public regarding the applicable rules
9 and policies; and

10 (2) provide an online forum on the department's
11 Internet website through which members of the public may submit
12 commentary regarding the applicable rules and policies for not less
13 than 60 days; and

14 (3) respond to each public comment submitted during
15 the hearing or through the Internet portal required by Subdivisions
16 (1) and (2) respectively.

17 SECTION 4. SUBMISSION DEADLINE. (a) Not later than
18 December 1, 2026, the department shall complete the study required
19 by Section 2(a) and provide a report regarding the study's findings
20 to:

21 (1) the governor;

22 (2) the lieutenant governor;

23 (3) the speaker of the house of representatives;

24 (4) each member of the committee of the senate having
25 primary jurisdiction over wildlife matters; and

26 (5) each member of the committee of the house of
27 representatives having primary jurisdiction over wildlife matters.

1 (b) The department shall make the report required by
2 Subsection (a) available to any member of the Legislature or any
3 member of the public upon request and at no cost to the requestor.

4 SECTION 5. EXPIRATION. This Act expires May 31, 2027.

5 SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect September
6 1, 2025.