

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 721  
By: Farias  
Defense & Veterans' Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, a veteran with a service-connected disability consisting of the loss of the use of a lower extremity or of a disability rating of 60 percent or more and who is receiving federal compensation for the disability qualifies for the waiver of resident hunting and fishing license fees in Texas. There are concerns that there are too few veterans benefiting from the waiver and that the minimum threshold for that qualifying disability rating is too high and may not be reflective of certain U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs service-connected disability ratings. H.B. 721 seeks to extend resident hunting and fishing license fee waivers to a larger number of disabled veterans as a gesture of appreciation for their service and sacrifice.

### **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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 721 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to decrease from 60 percent to 50 percent the minimum disability rating required for a veteran with a service-connected disability to be considered a qualified disabled veteran for purposes of a resident hunting or fishing license fee waiver.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2015.