

SUBJECT: Waiving state park entrance fees for Texas State Guard members

COMMITTEE: Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Corte, Vaught, Chavez, Farias, Pickett, C. Turner

0 nays

3 absent — Edwards, Maldonado, Ortiz

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — Kevin Good, Texas Parks and Wildlife

BACKGROUND: Parks and Wildlife Code, sec. 13.018 states that holders of Texas Parklands Passports are entitled to waived or reduced entrance fees to state parks. The following individuals qualify for State Parklands Passports:

- individuals 65 and over;
- disabled veterans with a 60 percent disability rating; and
- individuals who are significantly mentally or physically impaired.

The Texas State Guard is one of three branches of the Texas Military Forces. The other two branches are the Texas Army National Guard and the Texas Air National Guard. The Texas State Guard provides military forces to assist in times of emergency and performs community service.

DIGEST: HB 3989 would waive state park entrance fees and vehicle entrance fees for active members of the Texas State Guard. Fees would be waived upon presentation of a Texas State Guard identification card.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2009.

NOTES: According to the fiscal note, there currently are 1,600 active members of the Texas State Guard. The LBB estimates a revenue loss from the bill

from exempting State Guard members from state park entrance fees of \$1,000 in fiscal 2010 and \$1,046 in fiscal 2011.