

- SUBJECT:** Requiring sound-producing devices on non-motorized vessels
- COMMITTEE:** Culture, Recreation and Tourism — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 6 ayes — Frullo, Faircloth, Fallon, Gervin-Hawkins, Krause, Martinez
0 nays
1 absent — D. Bonnen
- WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Sinclair, Game Warden Peace Officers Association; John Shepperd, Texas Foundation for Conservation; Susan Patten)
Against — None
On — Kevin Davis, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- BACKGROUND:** Parks and Wildlife Code, sec. 31.065 requires a motorboat to have an efficient whistle or other sound-producing device if one is required by the commandant of the Coast Guard. Sec. 31.073(a) exempts non-motorized vessels from safety equipment requirements, except that they must have a personal flotation device for each person on board and certain lights.
Some have suggested that Texas law contradicts federal law, which requires all vessels to have some form of sound-producing device, and that the state's access to federal funding might be affected as a result.
- DIGEST:** HB 550 would require non-motorized vessels such as canoes, kayaks, punts, rowboats, sailboats, and rubber rafts to have a sound-producing device prescribed by the commandant of the Coast Guard.
The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2017.